

# AKIRA

1

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

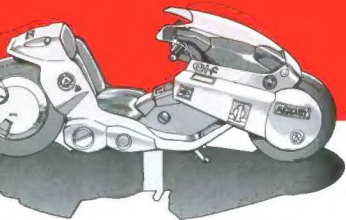


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# AKIRA

KATSUHIRO OTOMO

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**BOOK  
ONE**

  
DARK HORSE COMICS®

*translation and english-language adaptation*

**YOKO UMEZAWA, LINDA M. YORK,  
and JO DUFFY**

*graphics adaptation and sound effects lettering*

**DAVID SCHMIT for DIGIBOX  
and ÉDITIONS CLÉHAT**

*digital lettering and additional graphics adaptation*

**DIGITAL CHAMELEON  
and DARK HORSE COMICS**

*publisher*

**MIKE RICHARDSON**

*original series editor*

**KOICHI TURI**

*editor*

**CHRIS WARNER**

*consulting editor*

**TOKEN SMITH for STUDIO PROTEUS**

*collection designer*

**LIA RIBACCHI**

*art director*

**MARK COX**



## **AKIRA BOOK ONE**

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KATSUHIRO OTOMO



**BOOK  
ONE**



DARK HORSE COMICS®

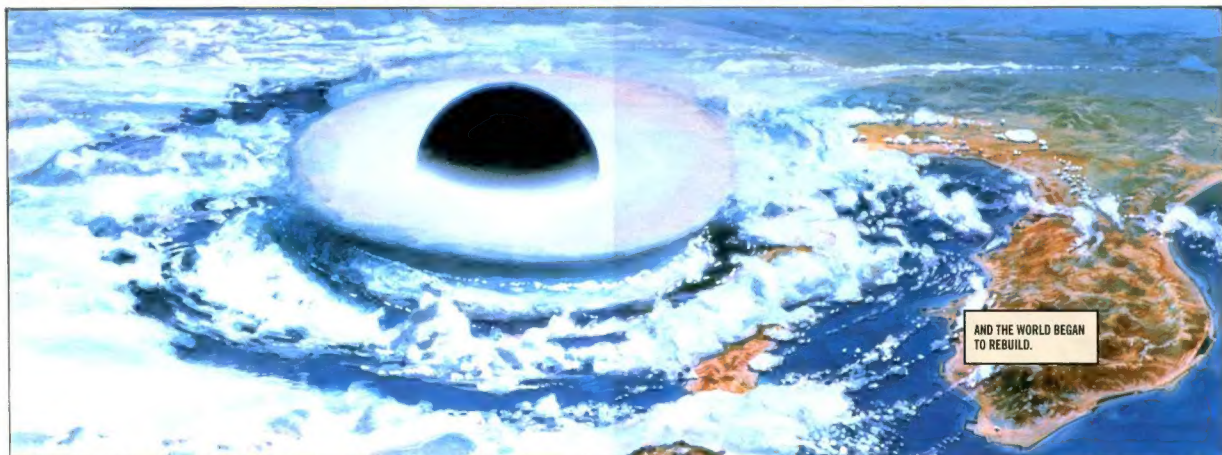
AT 2:17 P.M. ON DECEMBER 6TH, 1992,  
A NEW TYPE OF BOMB EXPLODED OVER  
THE METROPOLITAN AREA OF JAPAN.



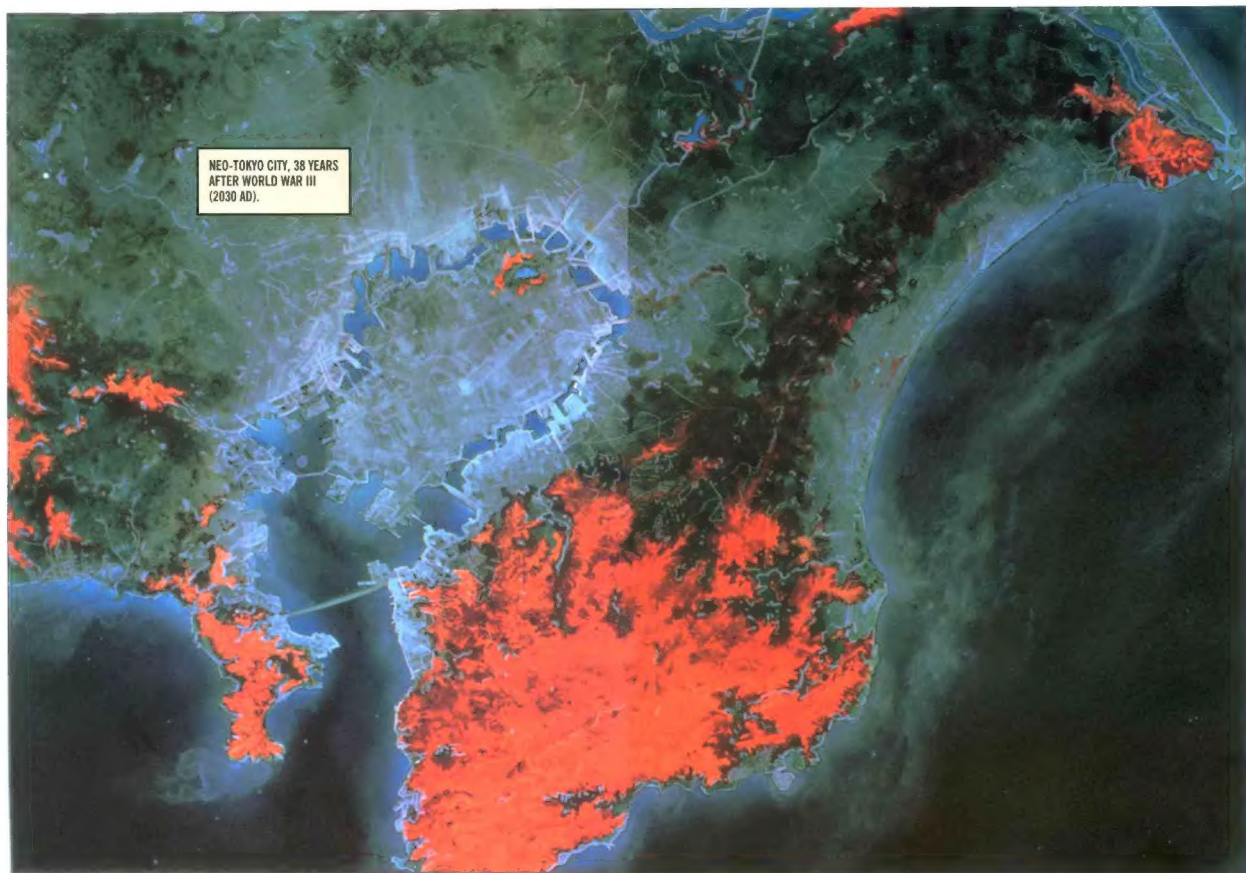
# AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO



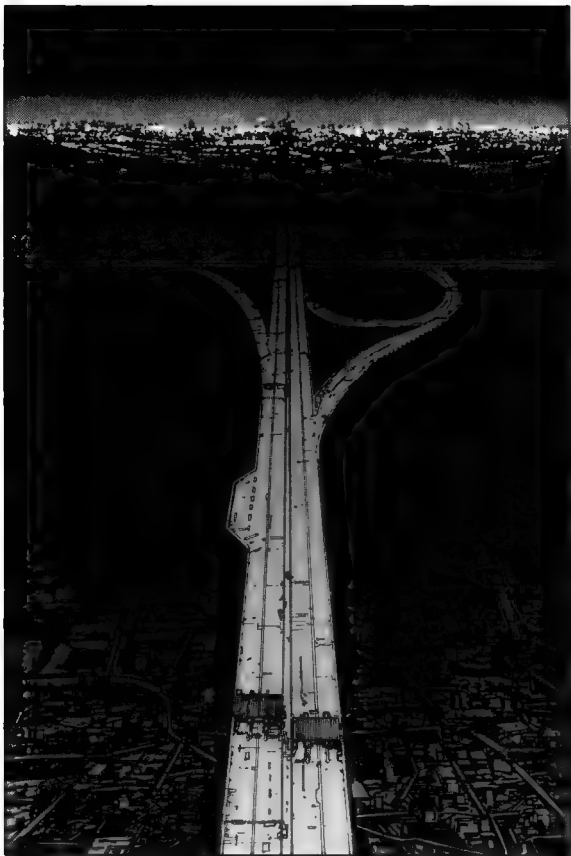


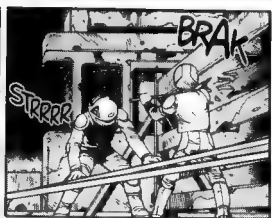
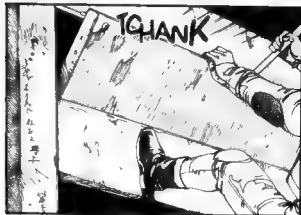
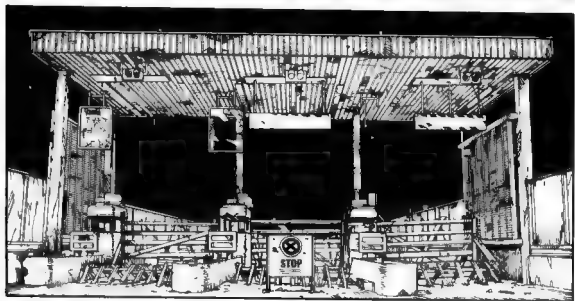
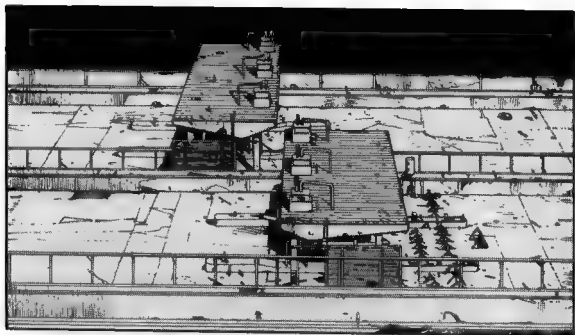




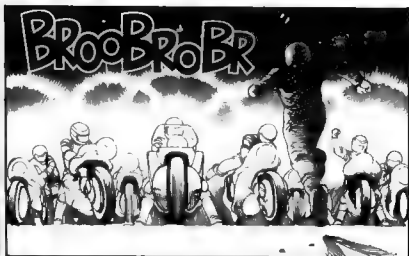
NEO-TOKYO CITY, 38 YEARS  
AFTER WORLD WAR III  
(2030 AD).

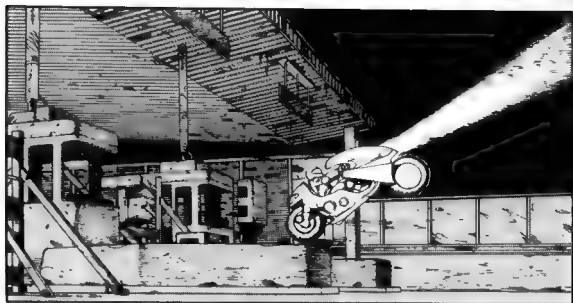


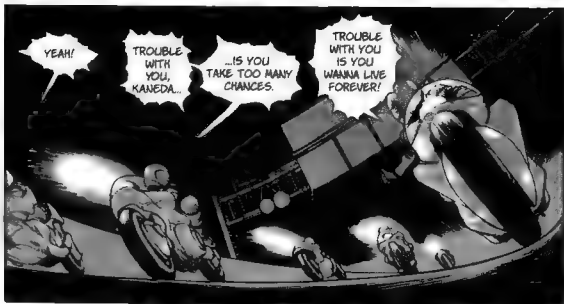
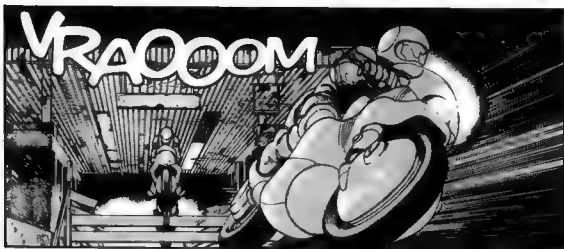
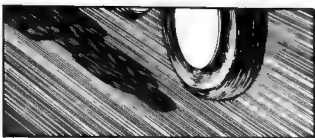


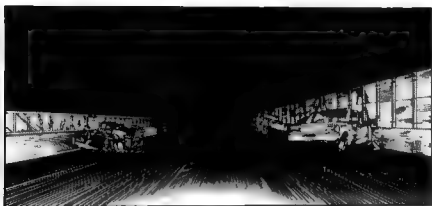
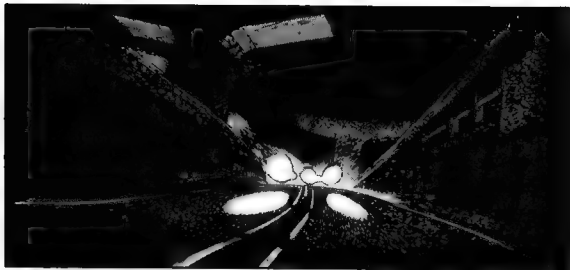


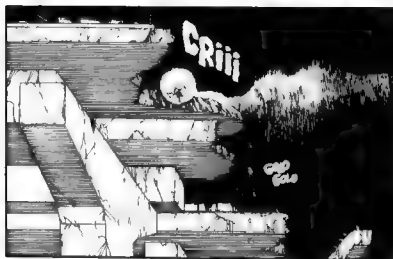














HEY,  
WE WERE  
JUST GETTING  
INTO IT...WHY'D  
WE STOP?

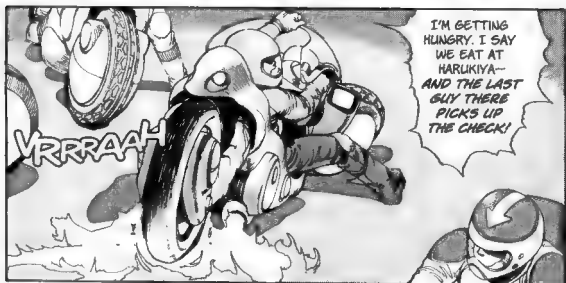
'CAUSE  
WE HIT A  
DEAD END,  
DUMMY AND  
I DO MEAN  
DEAD.

THIS IS THE  
HEART OF ALL  
THE DESTRUCTION  
WE'RE RIGHT AT  
THE PLACE WHERE  
THE BOMB  
FELL.

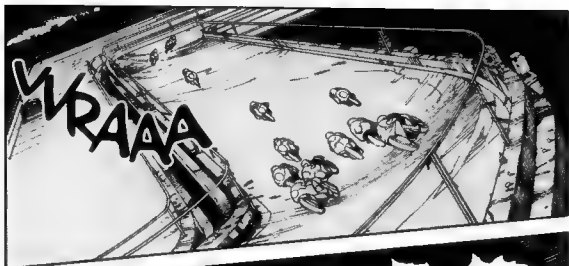
Brooo

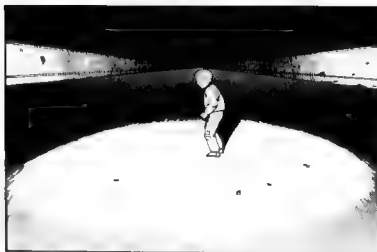
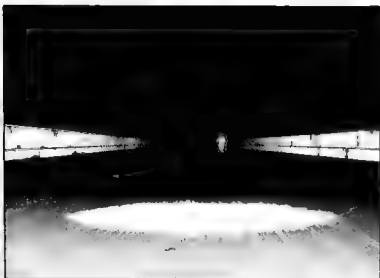
BrooBro









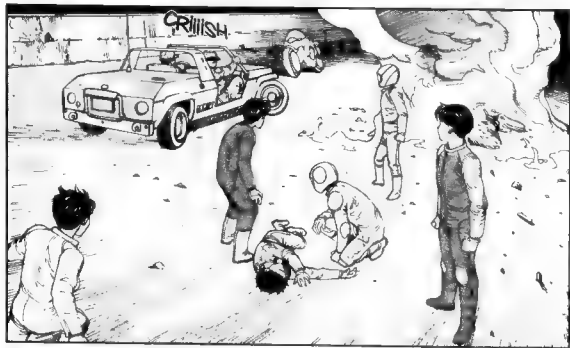


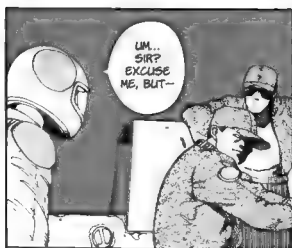




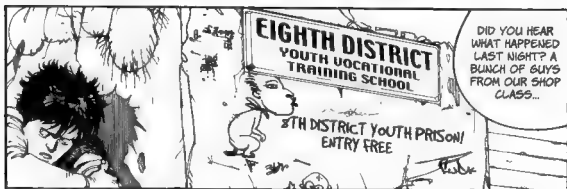
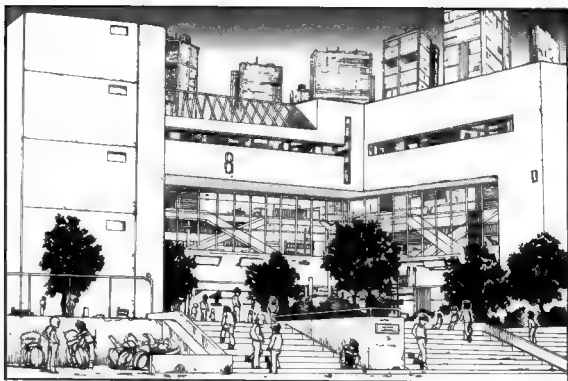


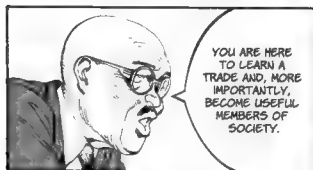
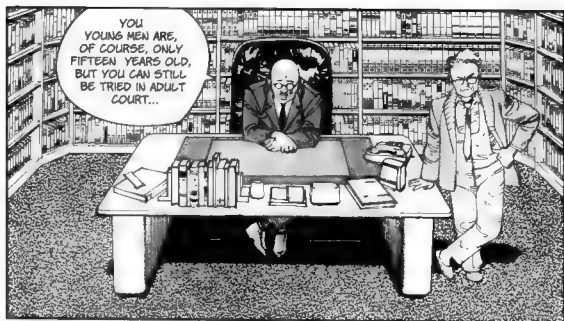


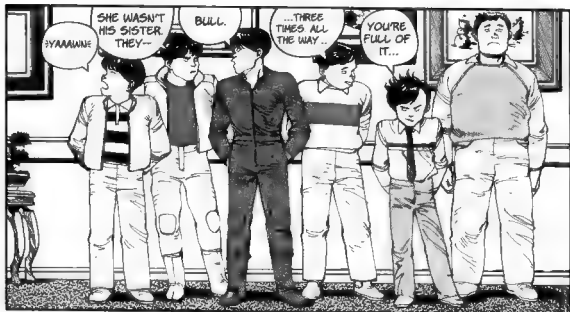


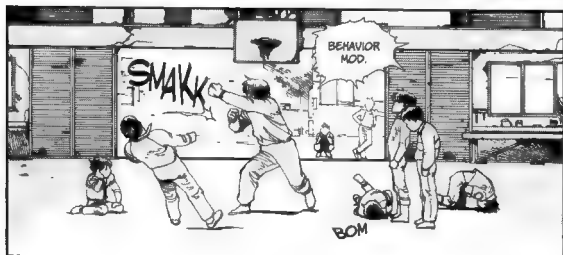


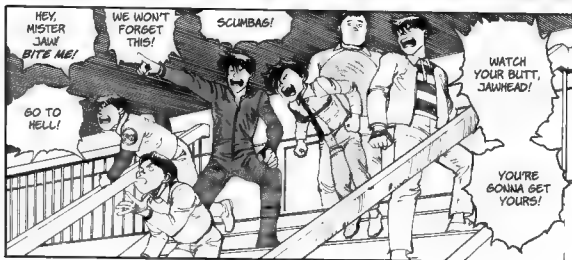
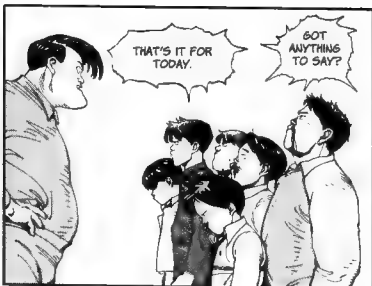


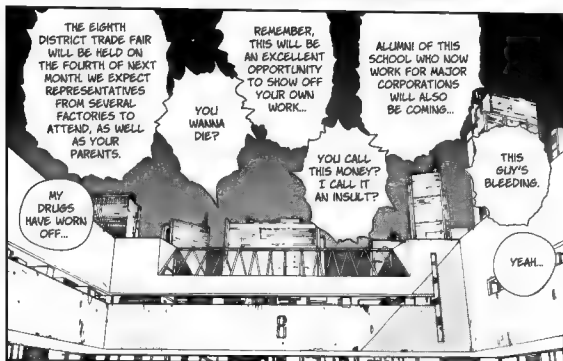


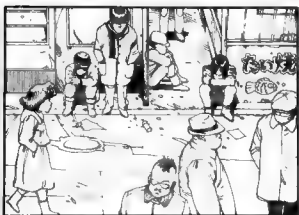
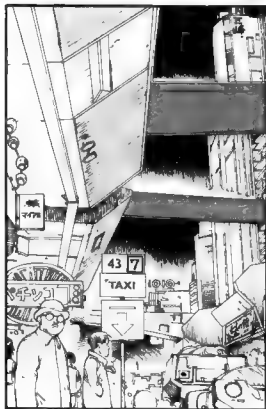
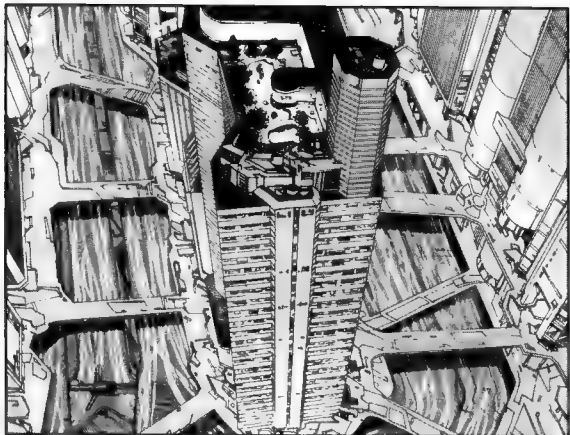
















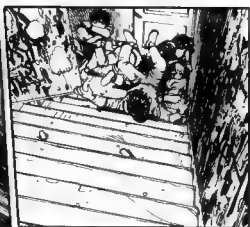


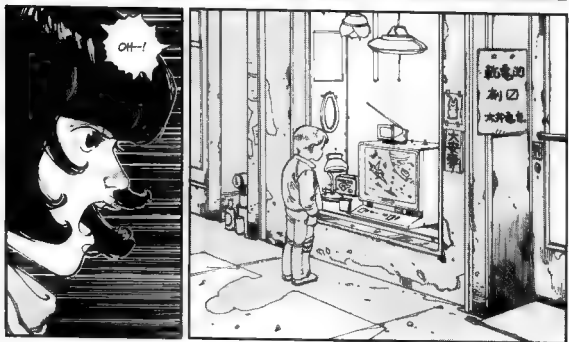


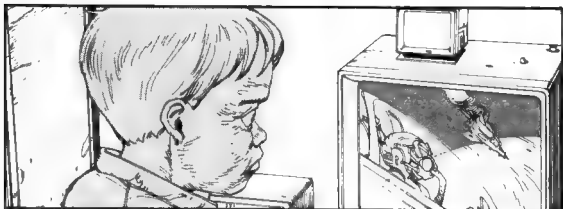












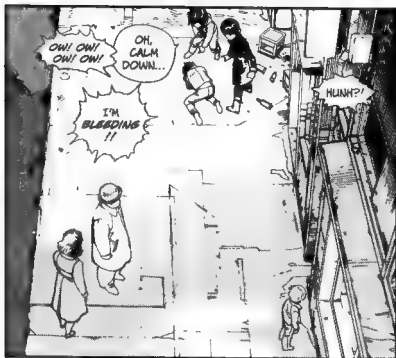




HE'S  
GETTING  
AWAY!



AAH—I  
CUT MY  
HAND!



OW! OW!  
OW! OW!

OH, CALM  
DOWN...

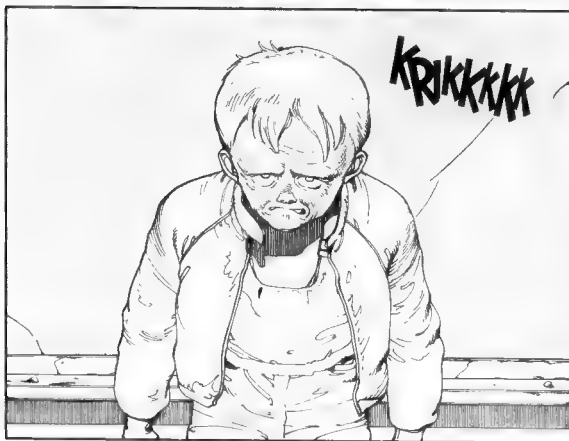
I'M  
BLEEDING  
!!

HUNKY?!



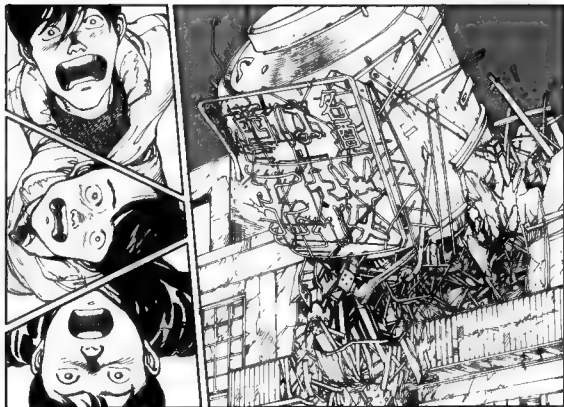
WELL,  
LOOK WHO'S  
HERE!



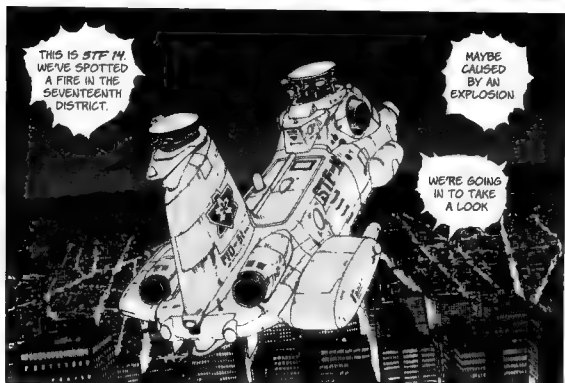
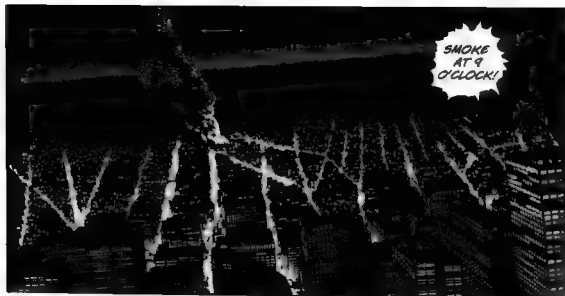




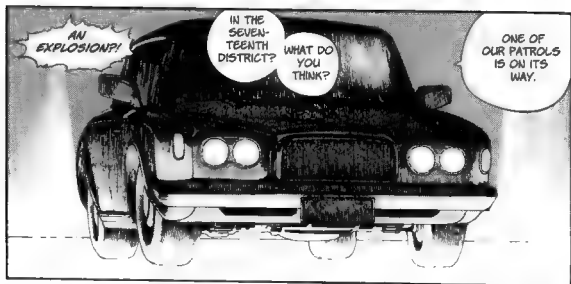


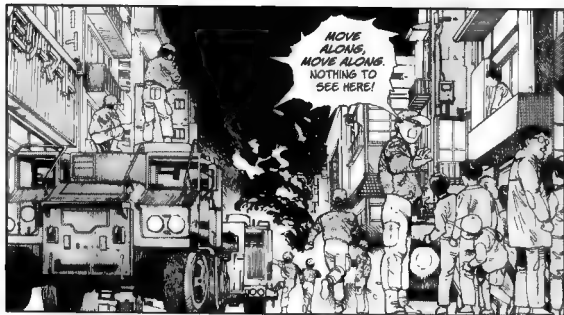


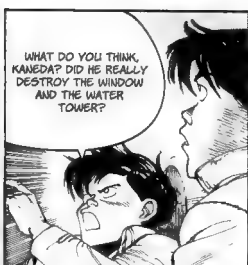


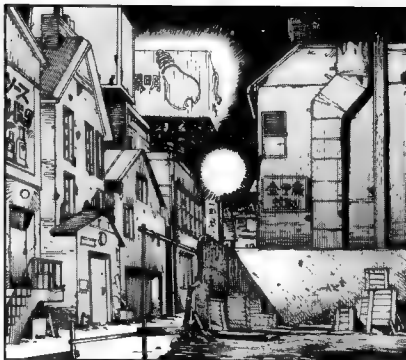


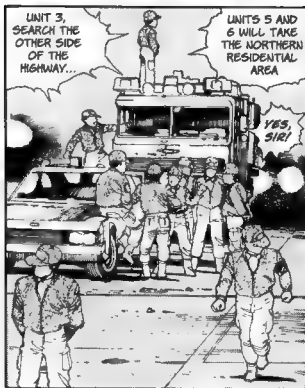
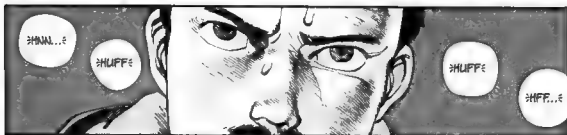
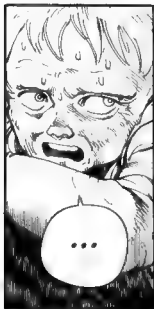




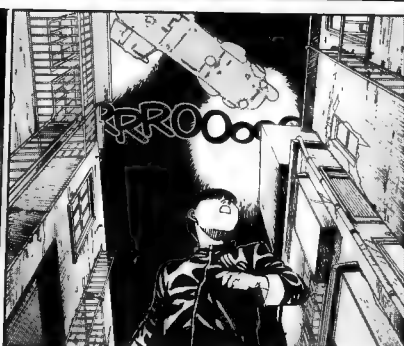


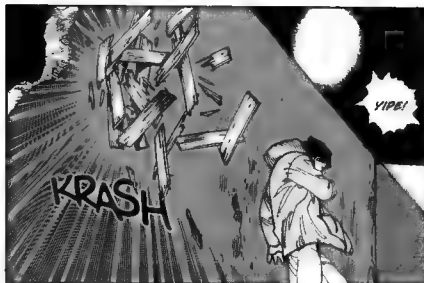








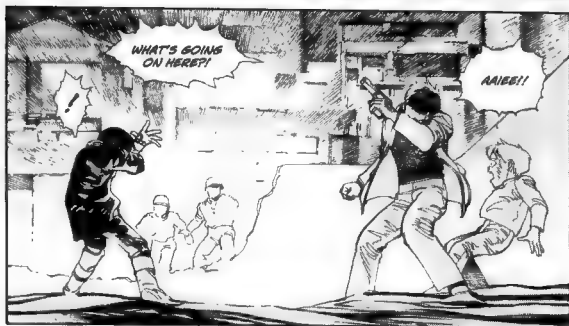




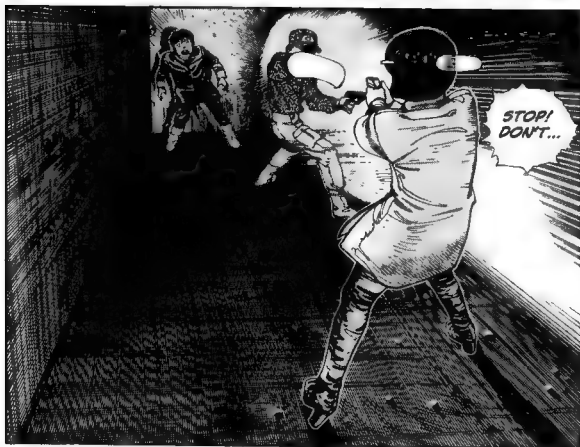
















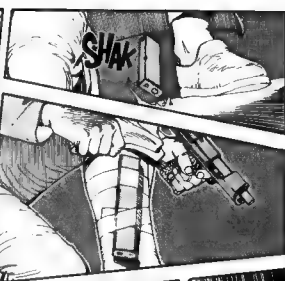


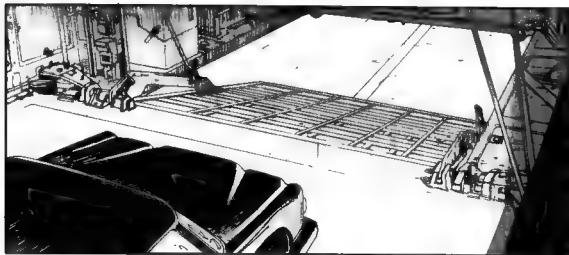
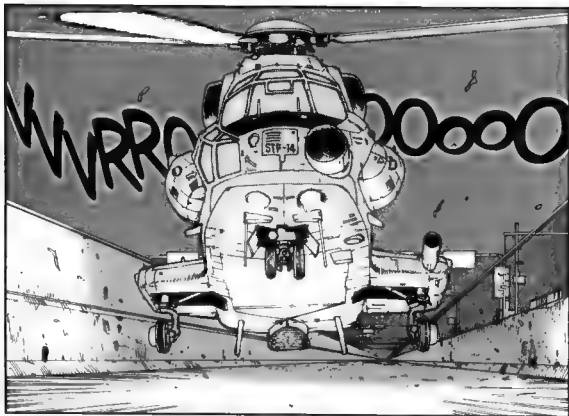


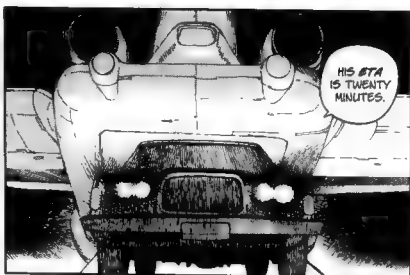


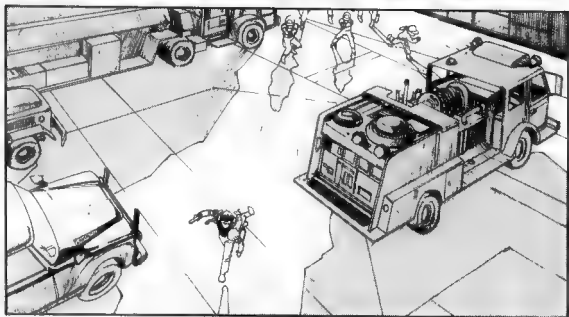
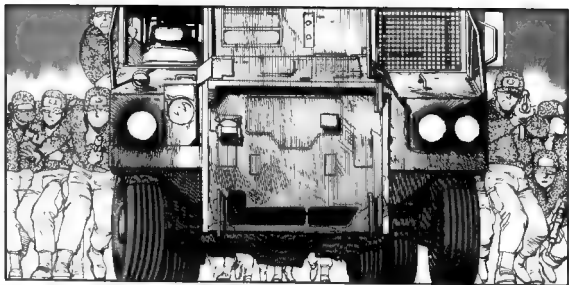


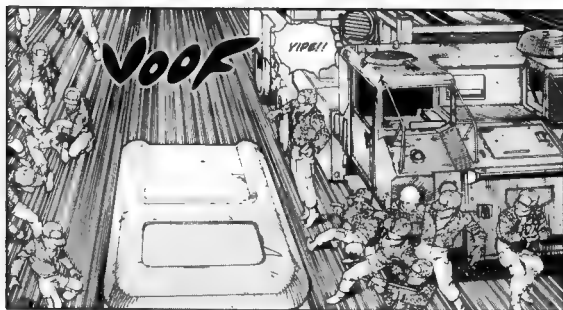






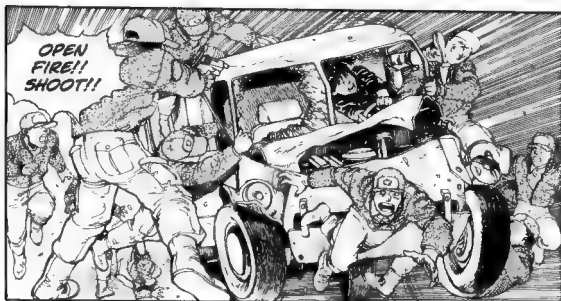


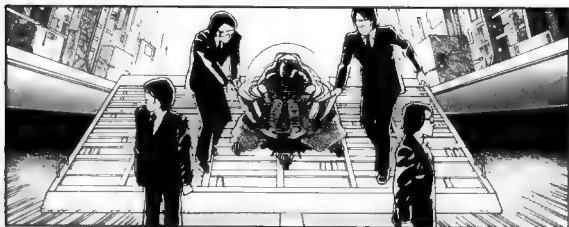


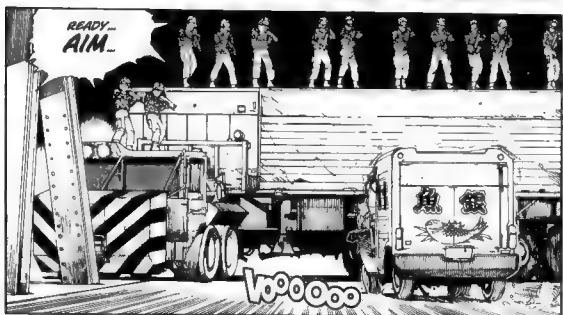








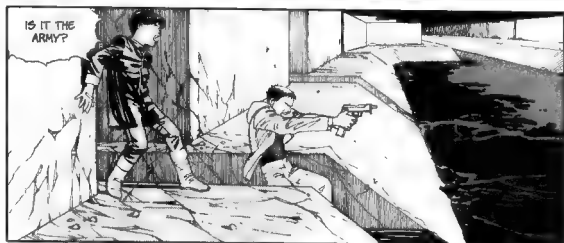
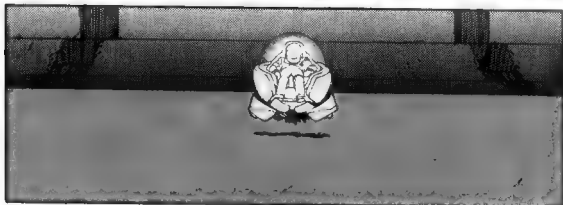




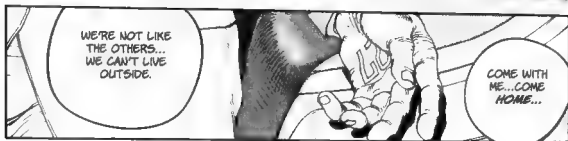




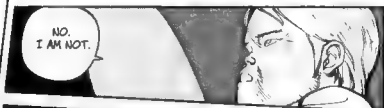
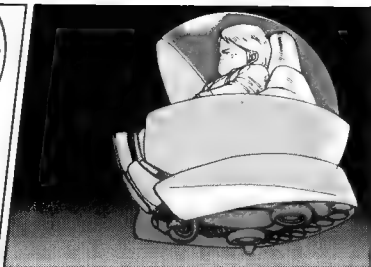










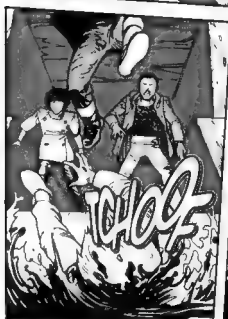


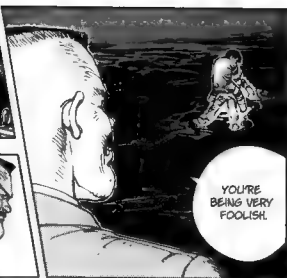




EVEN SO, I'M IMPRESSED YOU GOT THIS FAR.

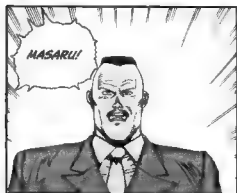






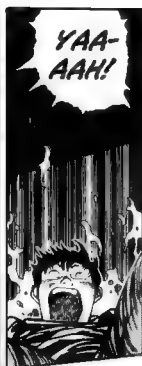








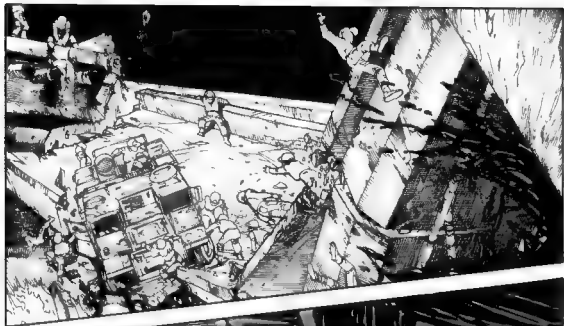




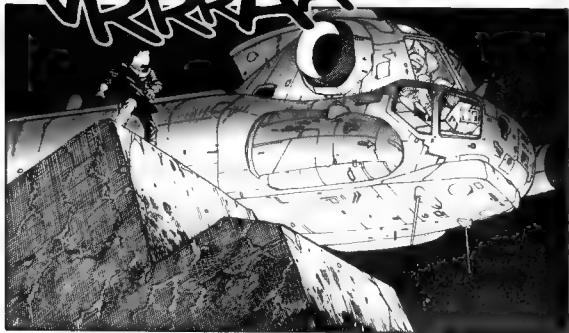
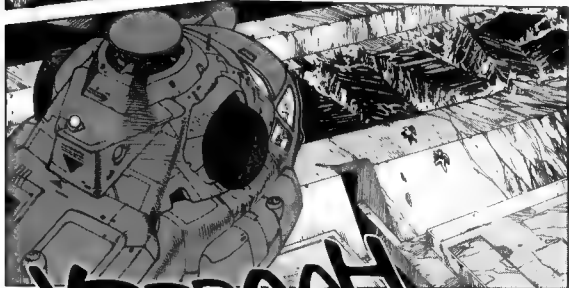


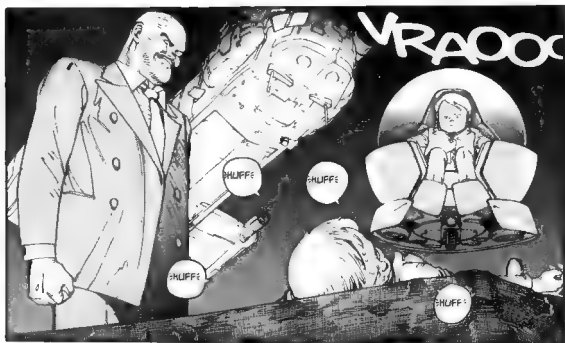




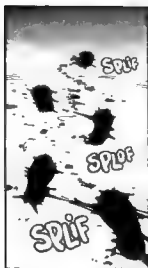


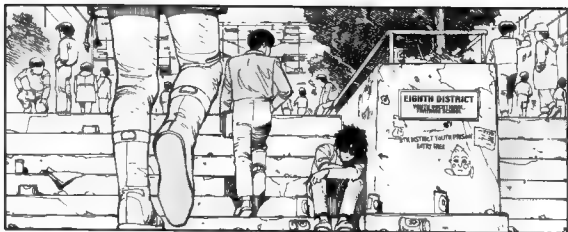


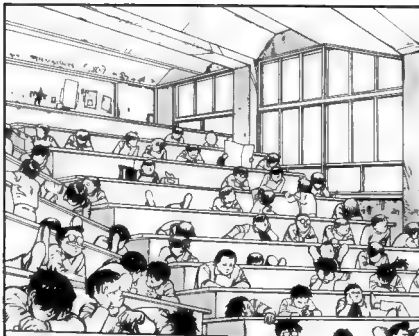












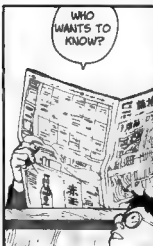
## JAPAN TIMES

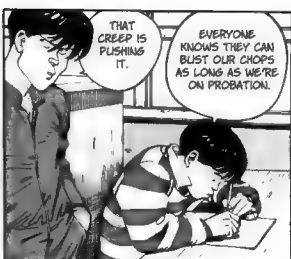
### A WEEK AFTER EIGHTEENTH DISTRICT DISASTER, CANAL REPAIRS STILL DELAYED

By the Department of Sewers  
day that delays in the repairs  
water canal, in the 18th District  
continuation of the raising  
for an additional aspect. It  
before the meeting will be  
17th District. Mr. Koshida,  
tea, condemned the extension  
saying "How long does it take  
Considering what we pay in  
[ed] service restored by now."



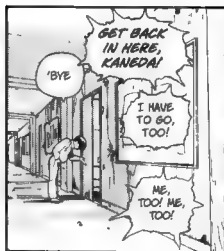
Kazuyuki Sato of the Department  
of Sewers also commented on rumo  
that the collapse of the canal was c  
by inadequate construction. "Our B  
staff is examining the damaged are  
comparing it to the approved plans  
not ruling out anything at this point  
the construction company respon  
for the work, Ohmori General Con



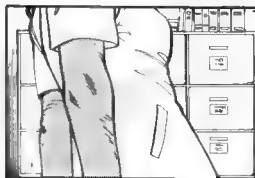
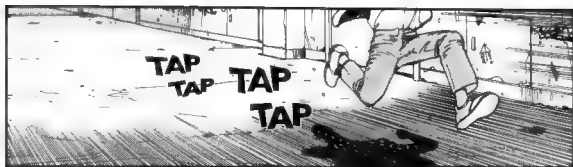


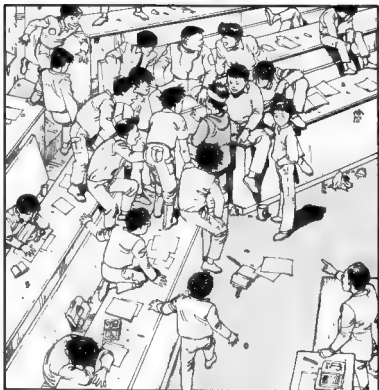
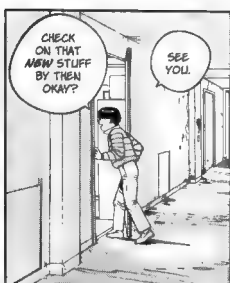


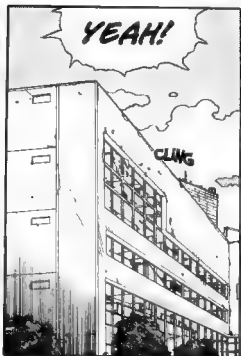


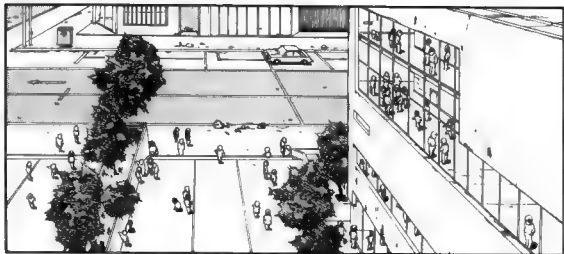














WHERE DID  
THAT STUFF  
YOU GAVE  
ME EARLIER  
COME FROM?



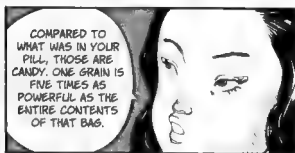
DID YOU FIND  
OUT WHAT IT  
IS?



PART OF IT...  
BUT IT CONTAINED  
CERTAIN ELEMENTS THAT  
DEFIED ANALYSIS, AT  
LEAST BY OUR  
EQUIPMENT.



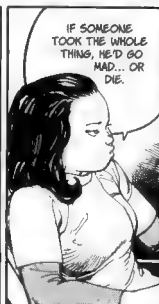
SO, DON'T  
KEEP ME IN  
SUSPENSE. THE  
GANG IS STILL  
WAITING FOR  
THEIR STUFF,  
YOU KNOW.



COMPARED TO  
WHAT WAS IN YOUR  
PILL, THOSE ARE  
CANDY. ONE GRAIN IS  
FIVE TIMES AS  
POWERFUL AS THE  
ENTIRE CONTENTS  
OF THAT BAG.



WHAT?



IF SOMEONE  
TOOK THE WHOLE  
THING, HE'D GO  
MAD... OR  
DIE.



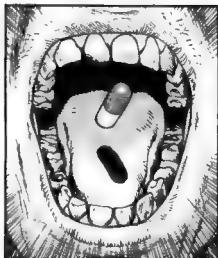
HMM...



ONE  
MORE  
THING...

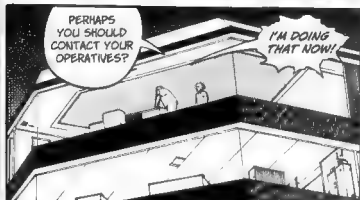
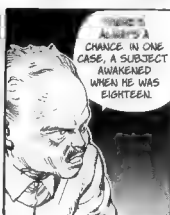


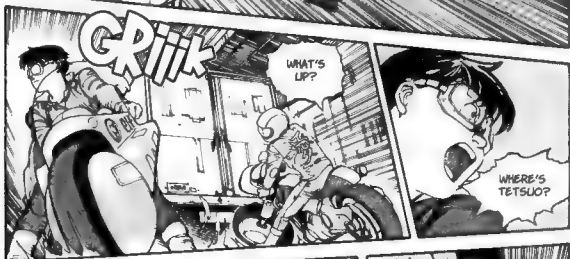
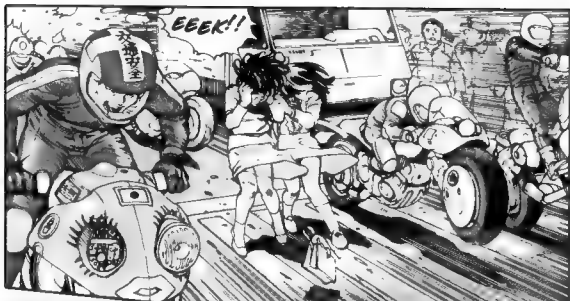




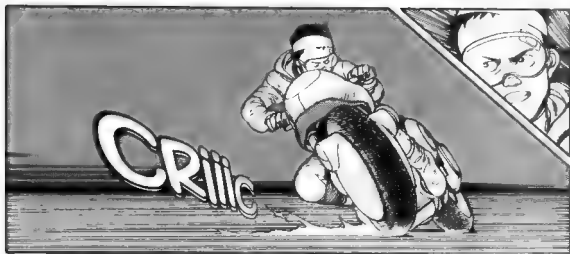
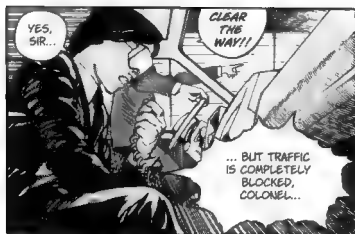


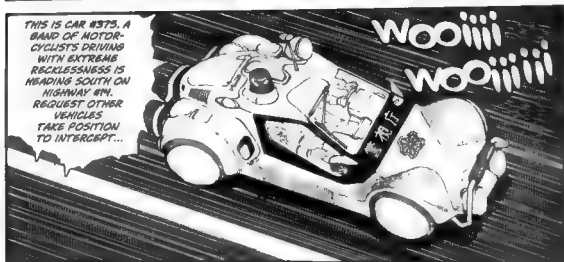
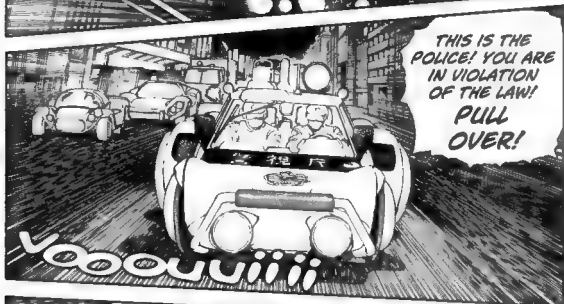




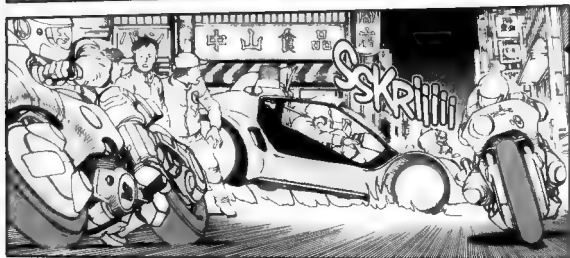


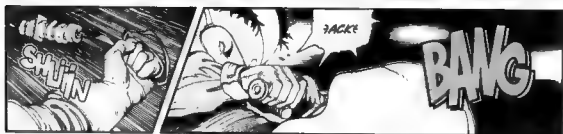
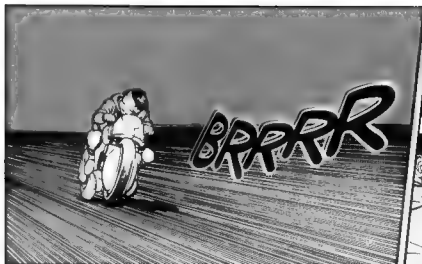


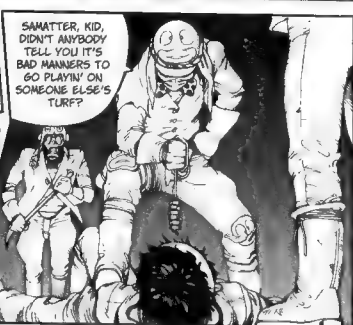












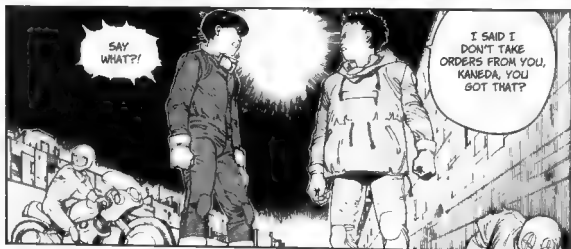








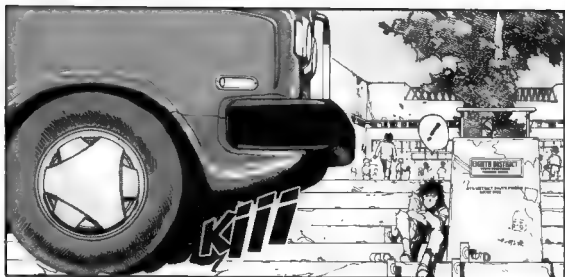
I DON'T  
TAKE ORDERS  
FROM YOU.



SAY  
WHAT?!

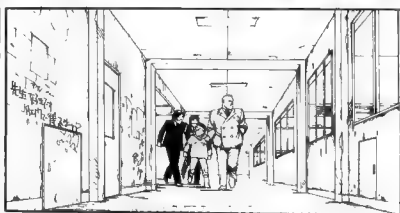
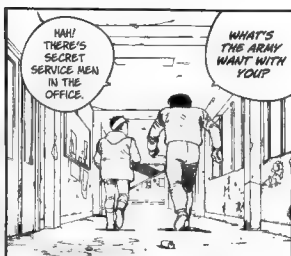
I SAID I  
DON'T TAKE  
ORDERS FROM YOU,  
KANEDA, YOU  
GOT THAT?



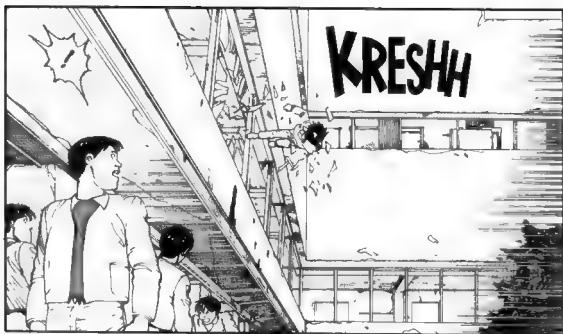


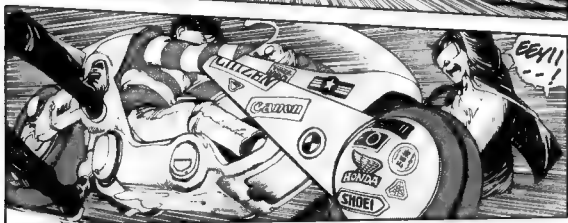




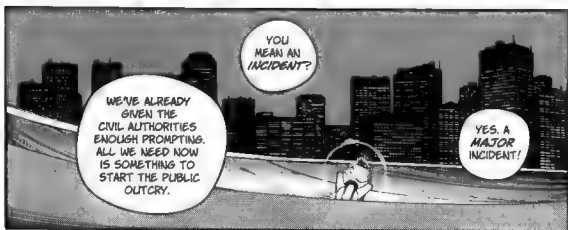
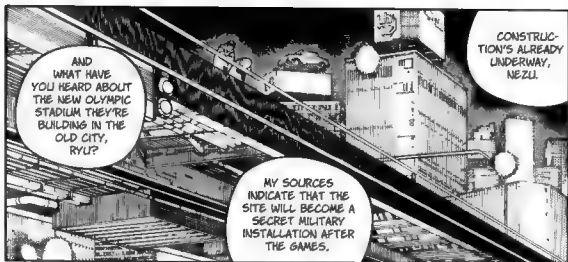


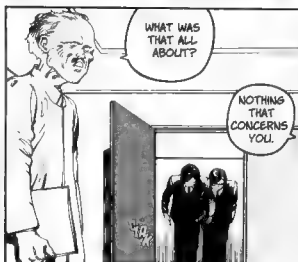




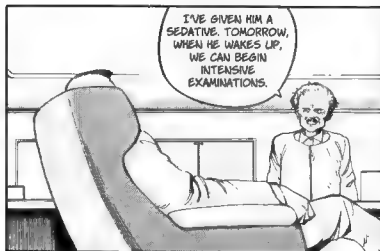








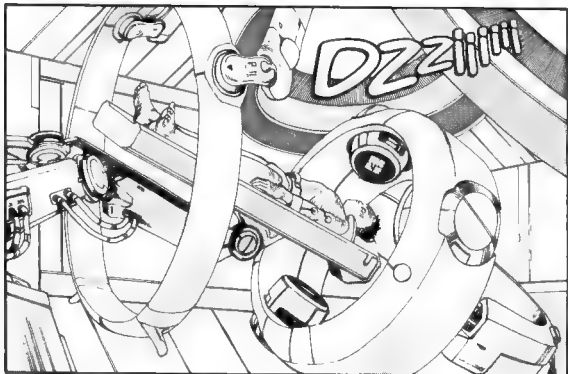
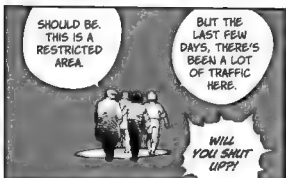


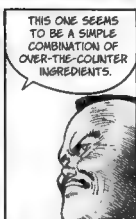
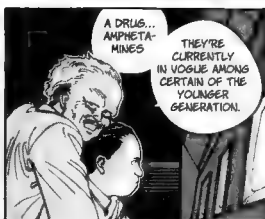
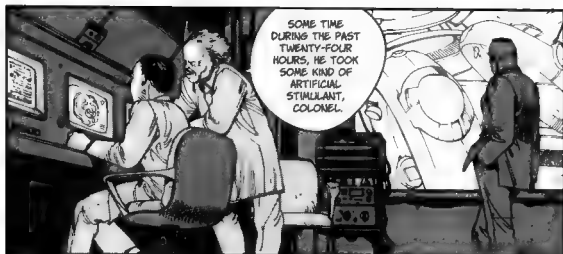


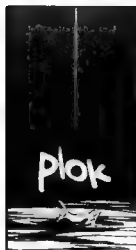
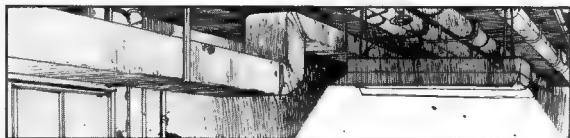
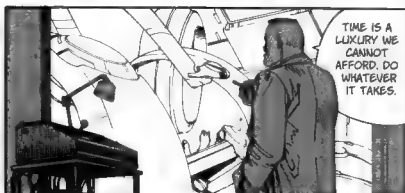
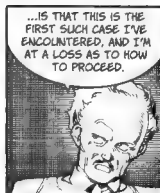


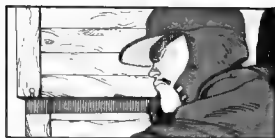












TOUGH  
AUDIENCE...



YOU SHOULD  
HAVE TOLD ME  
IMMEDIATELY,  
KEI!

DEFINITELY.

WE  
THOUGHT  
OUR REPORT  
TOOK  
PRECE-  
DENCE.

ARE YOU  
SURE IT'S  
HIMP?

TAP  
TAP

TAP  
TAP

HERE  
?!



KAM



GREETINGS!  
FANCY  
MEETING  
YOU HERE...  
HEH HEH.

WELCOME  
TO MY  
HUMBLE  
COMMODE.



HMP.



I'M GLAD  
YOU'RE HERE.  
I WANTED TO  
THANK YOU.

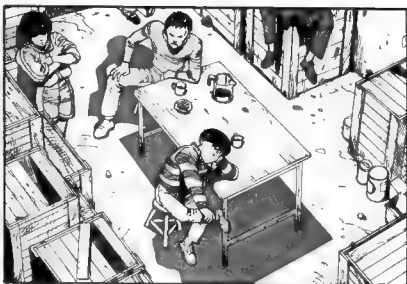
HUNK?

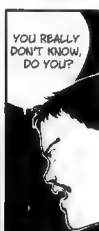
...

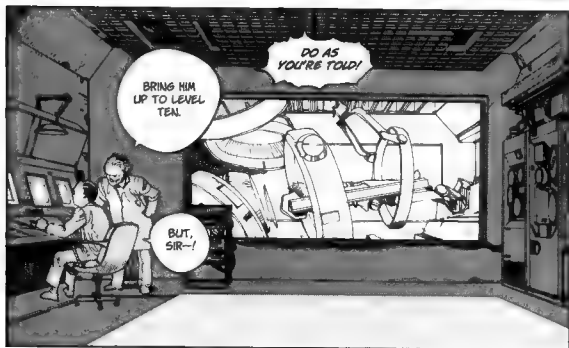
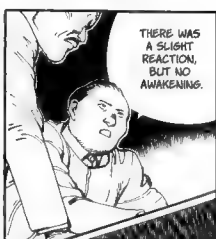
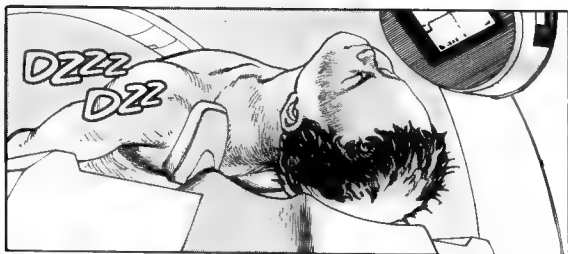


THANK  
...?

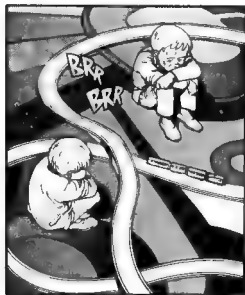
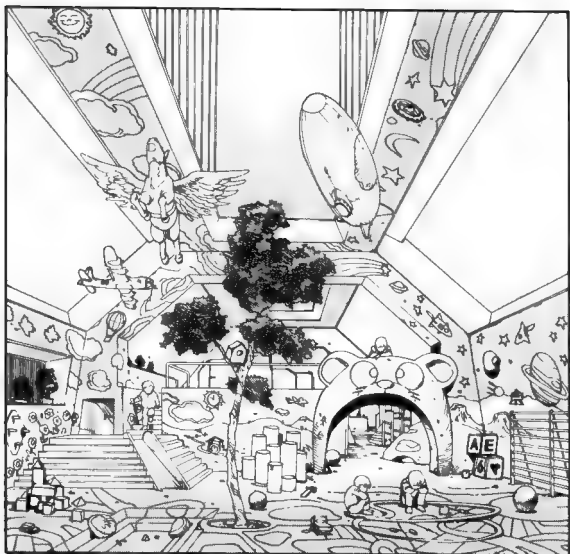




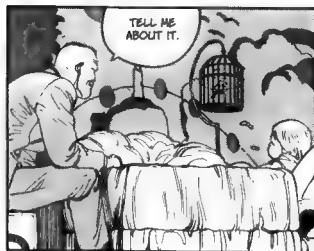
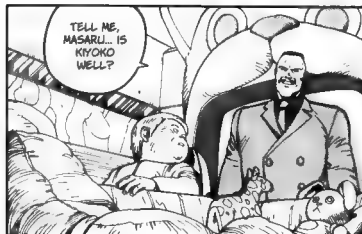










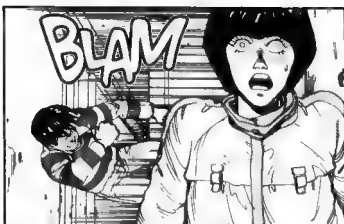




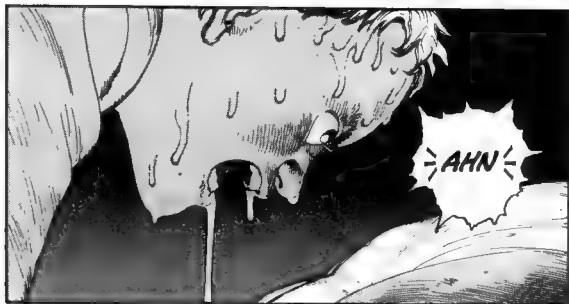
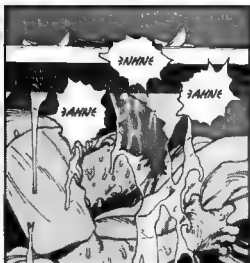
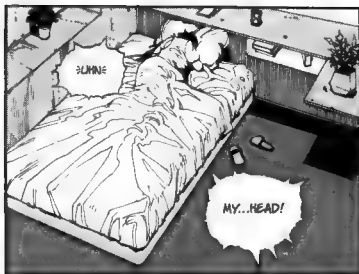


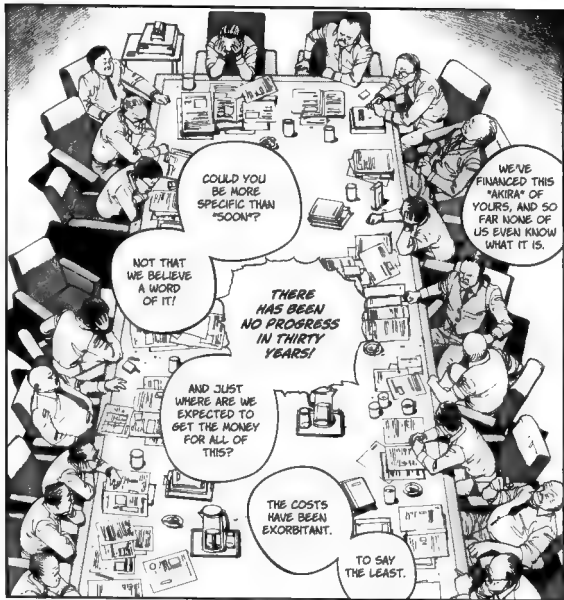


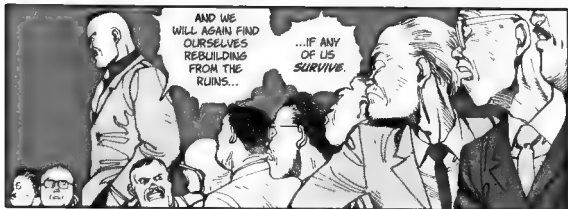






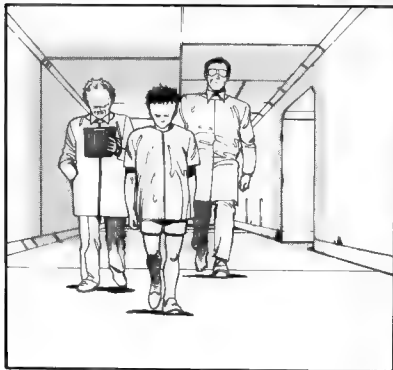


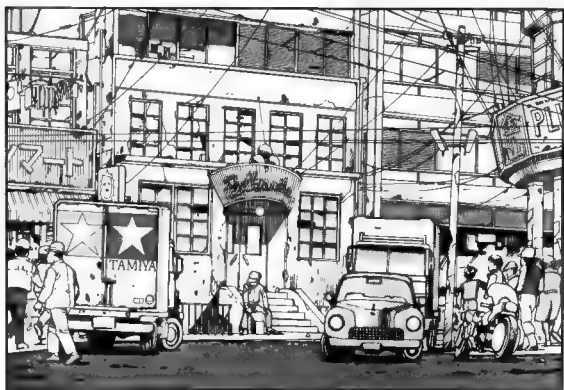




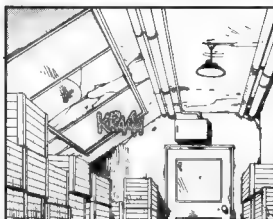




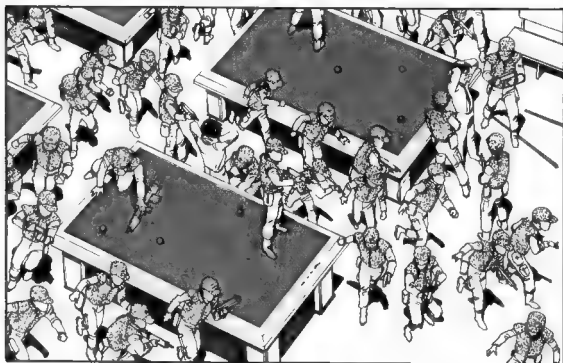




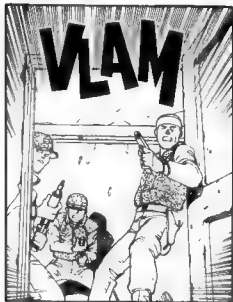




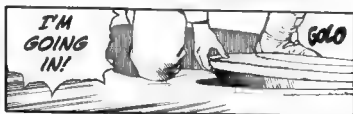
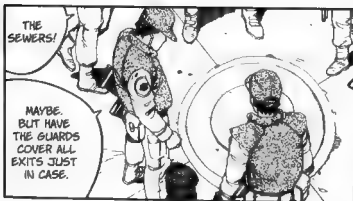


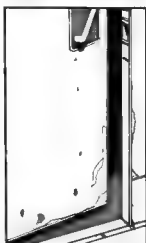
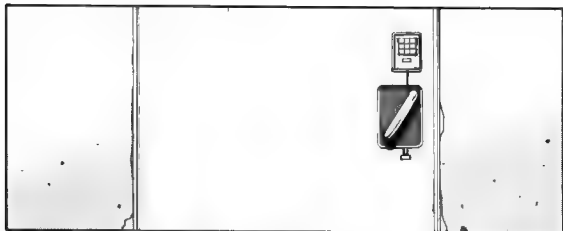


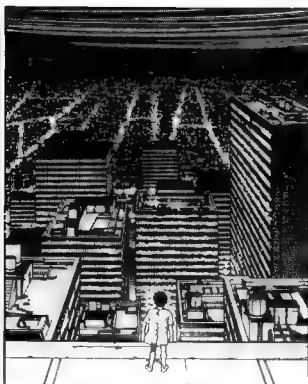
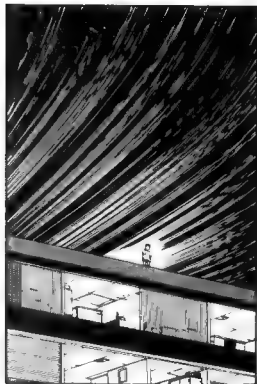


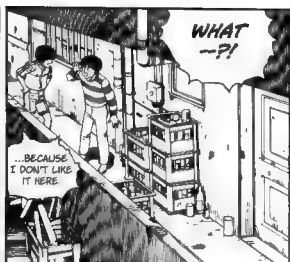


















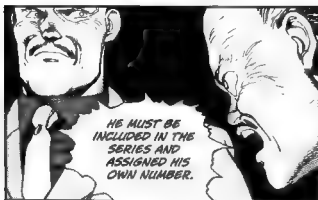
YOUR  
OPINION?



BEYOND  
ANYTHING I  
EXPECTED!

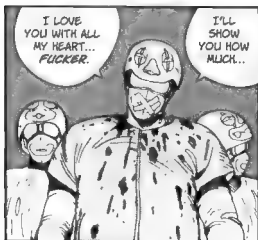
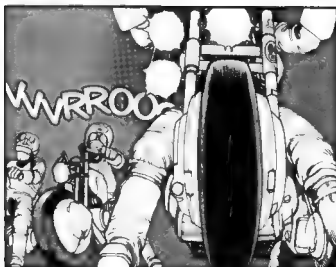
FOR HIM TO  
AWAKEN INTO  
SUCH POWER IN  
SO SHORT A  
SPAN OF  
TIME...

I BELIEVE  
NUMBER 41 IS THE  
NEXT AVAILABLE  
DESIGNATION...?



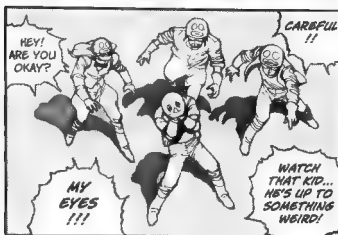
HE MUST BE  
INCLUDED IN THE  
SERIES AND  
ASSIGNED HIS  
OWN NUMBER.

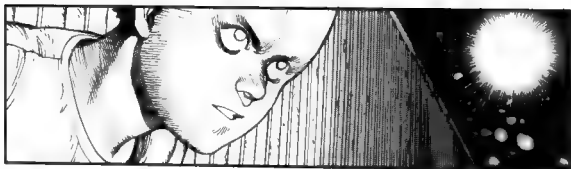


















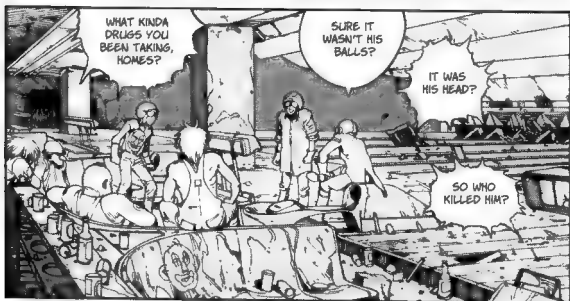


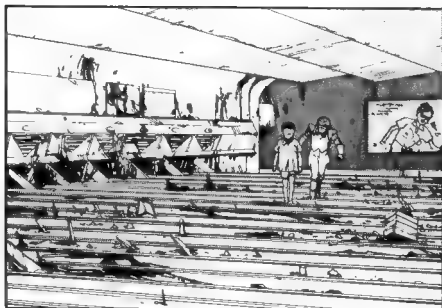






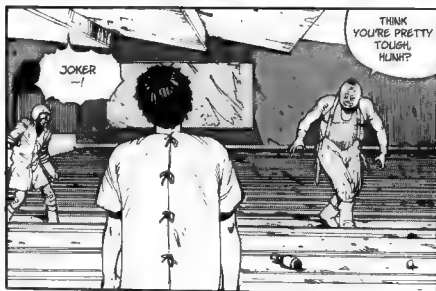


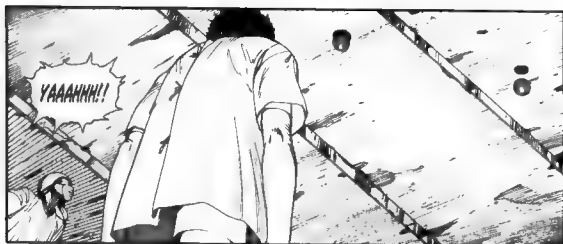


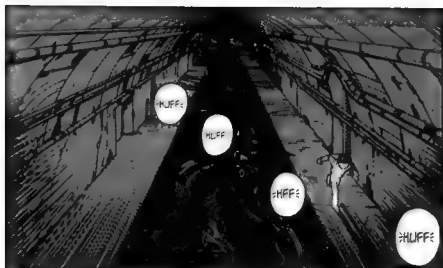


ARE YOU  
GONNA KEEP  
ME HERE ALL  
NIGHT?!



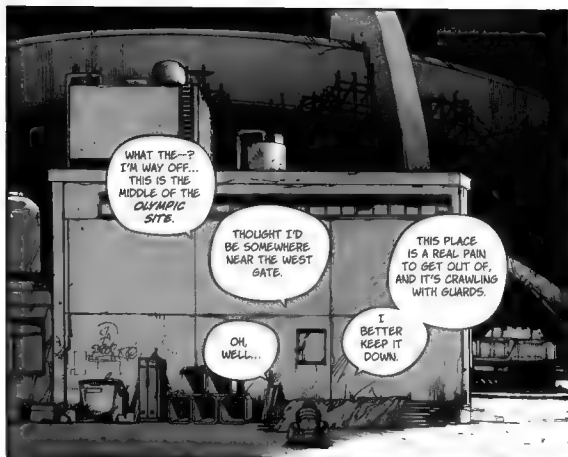


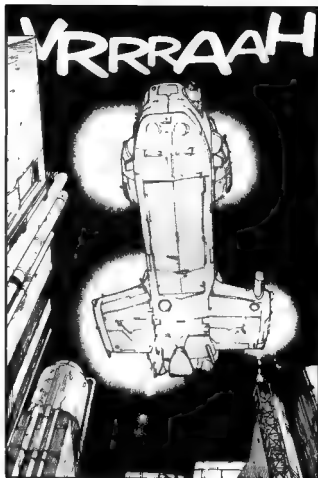


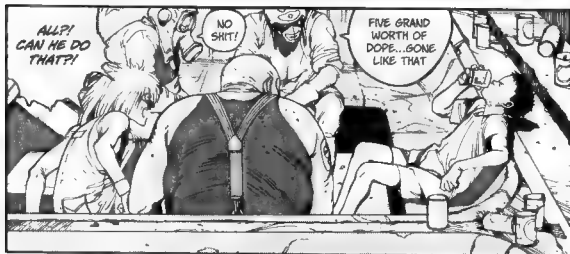


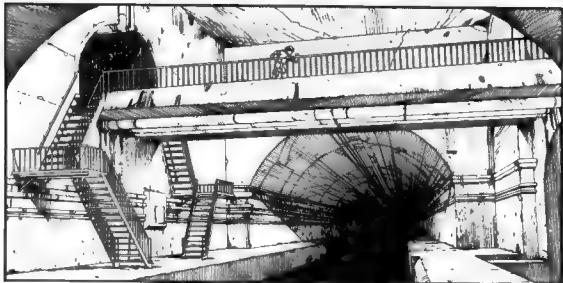


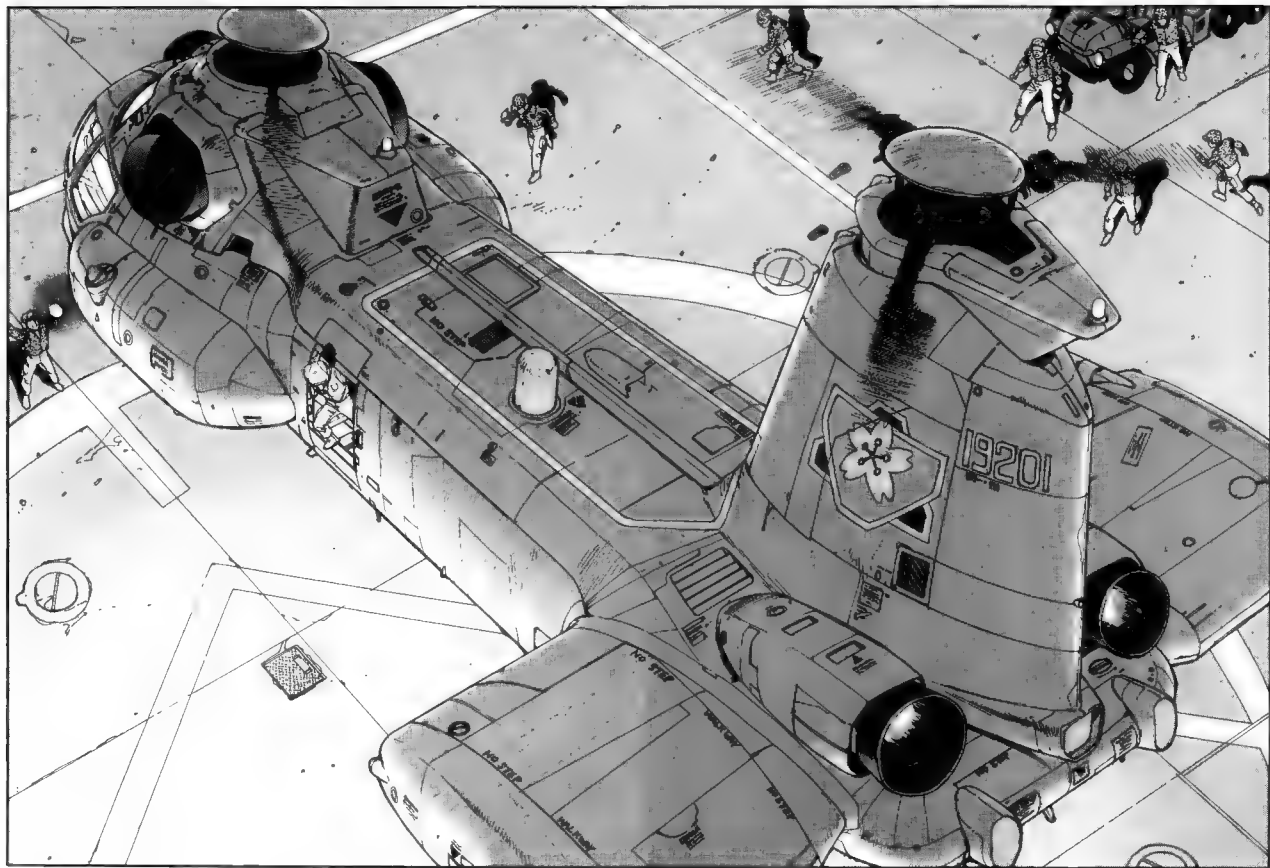


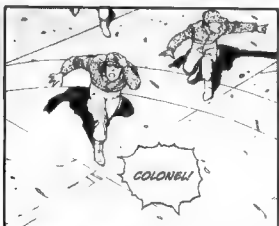
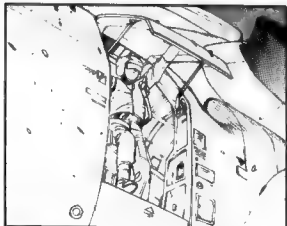
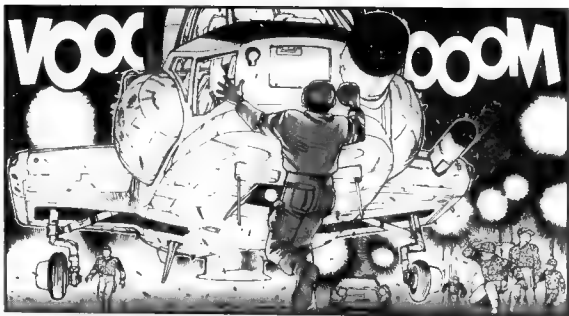


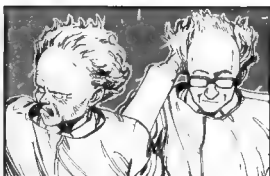


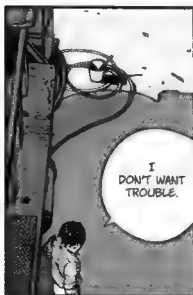






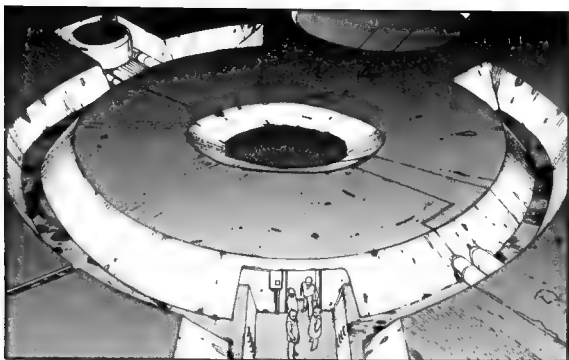


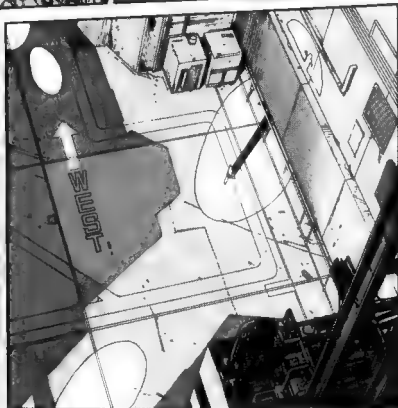


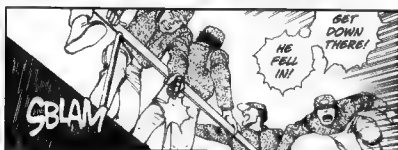


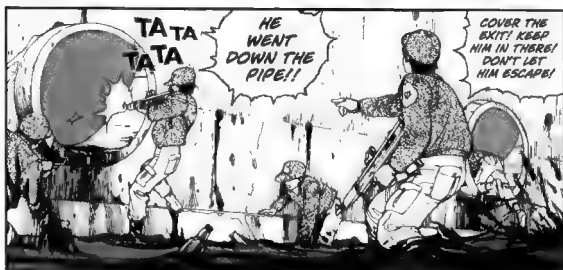


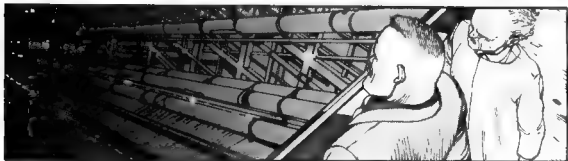
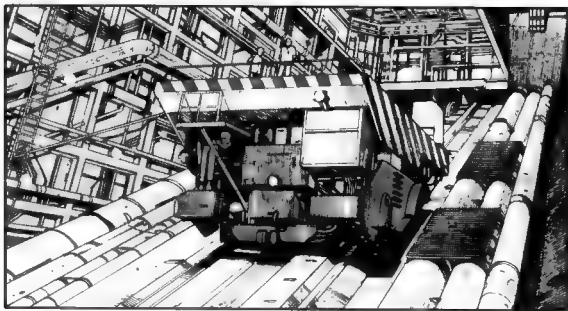
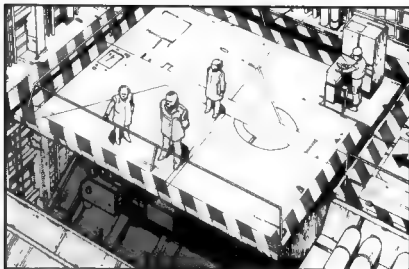


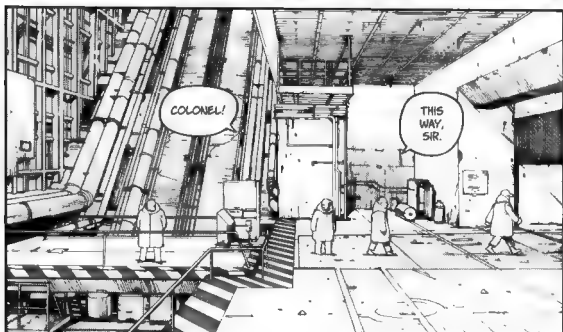
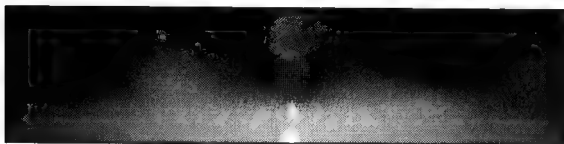


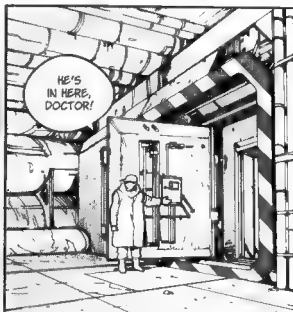
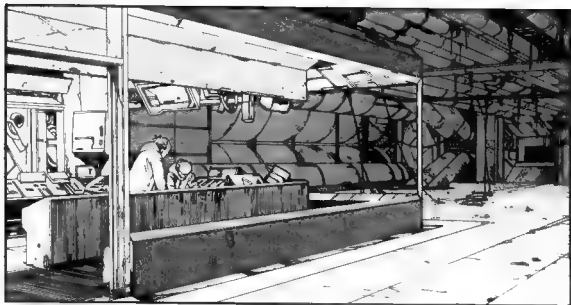






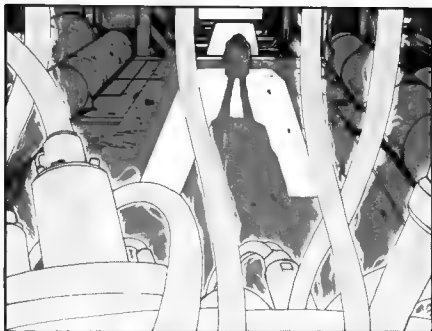






\*KELVIN: TEMPERATURE SCALE IN WHICH ABSOLUTE ZERO (-273° C) IS MEASURED AS 0°K.  
\*\*DEWAR FLASK: DOUBLE WALLS WITH INSULATED SURFACES AND A VACUUM BETWEEN,  
USED FOR THE CONTAINMENT OF EXTREME COLD.





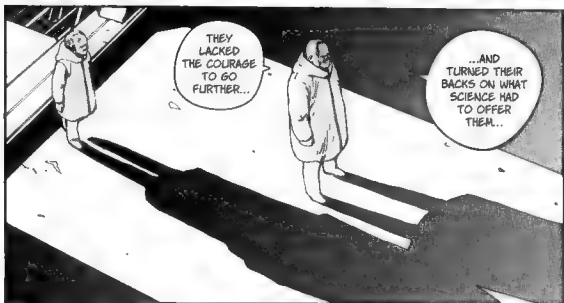
WHAT A  
DISGRACE!  
THEY WERE  
AFRAID...  
ASHAMED...

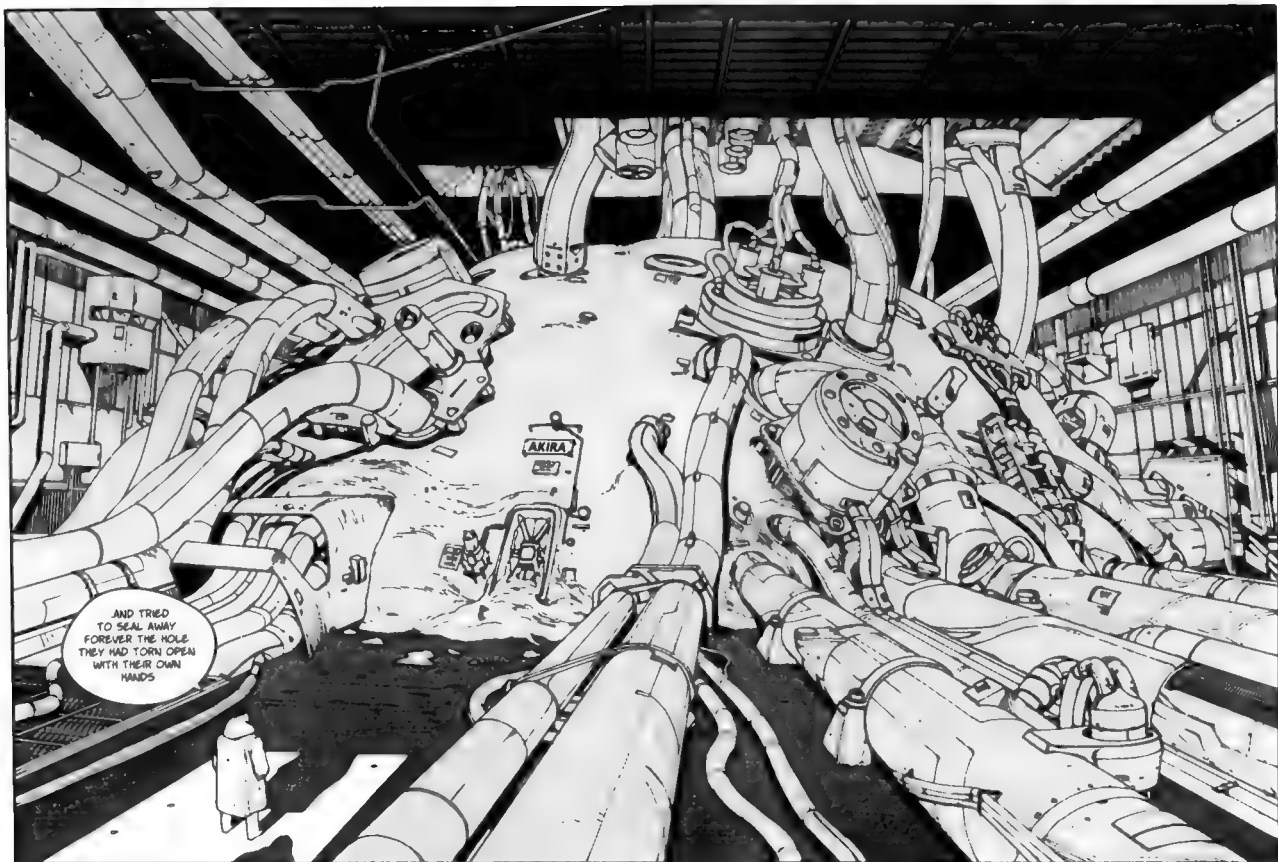
THEY CHOSE  
TO CONCEAL IT...  
THEY BURIED THE  
ROOTS OF A GREAT  
CIVILIZATION...

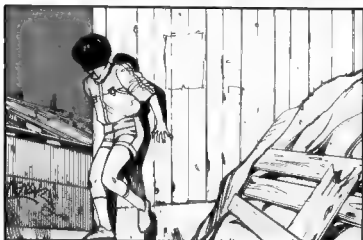
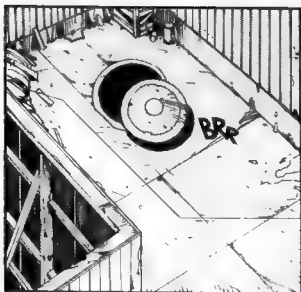


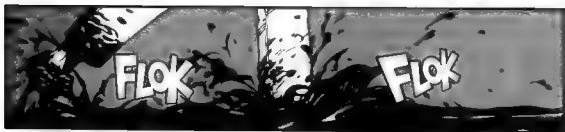
THEY  
LACKED  
THE COURAGE  
TO GO  
FURTHER...

...AND  
TURNED THEIR  
BACKS ON WHAT  
SCIENCE HAD  
TO OFFER  
THEM...



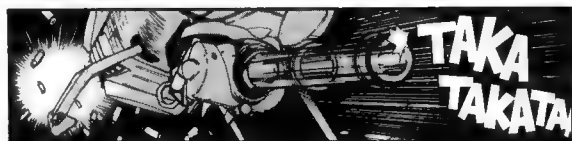


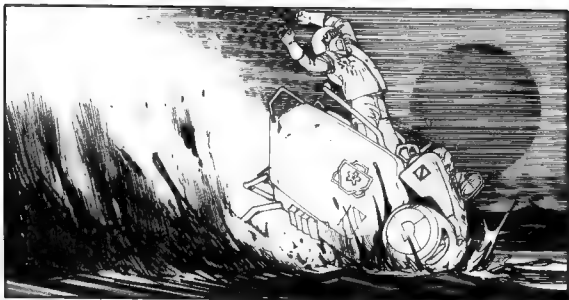










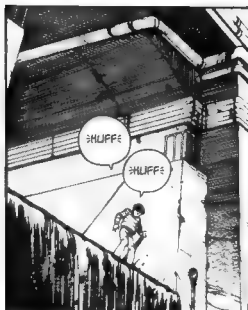




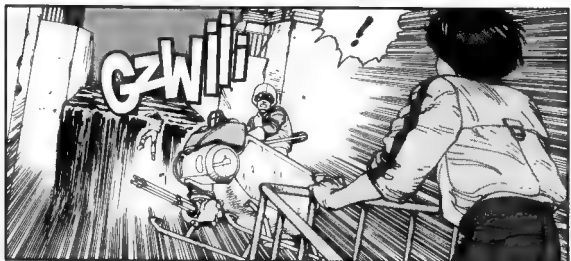


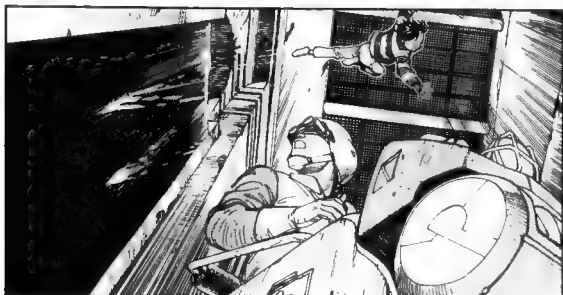


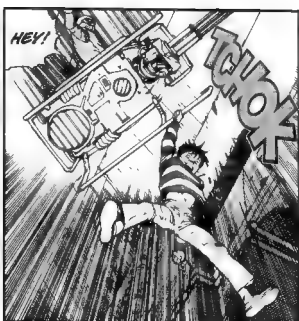






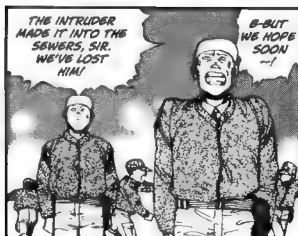


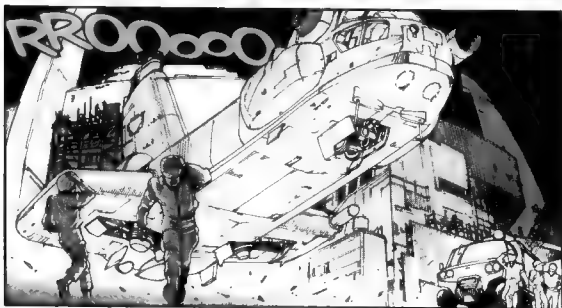
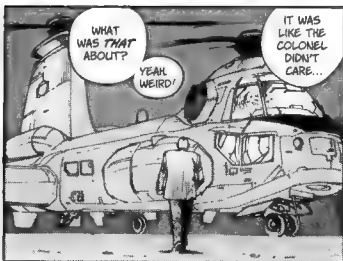
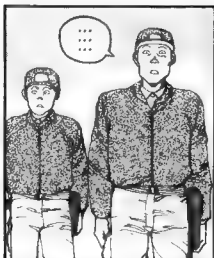


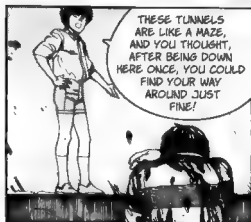
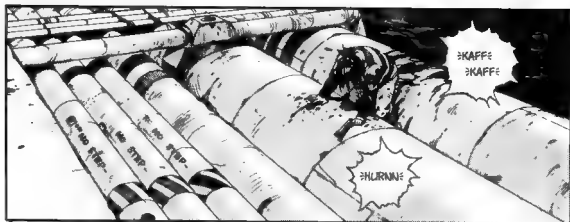


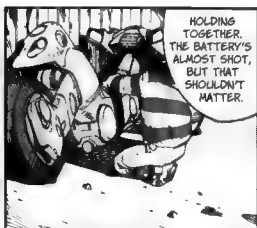


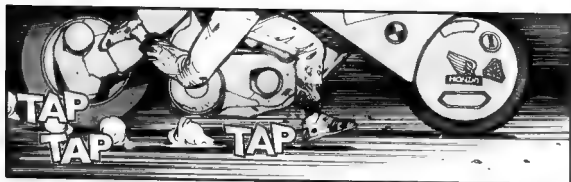


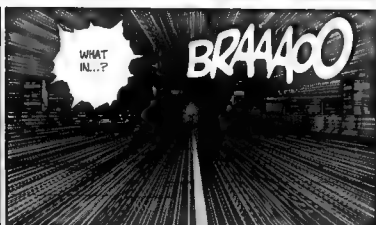
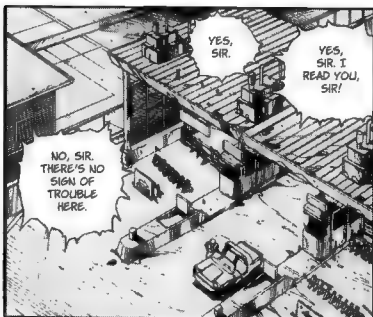








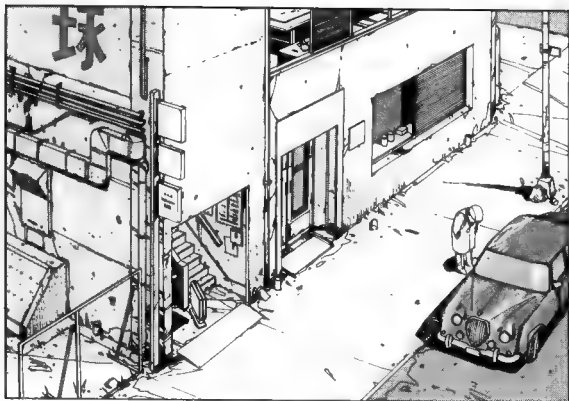


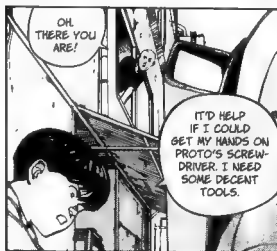
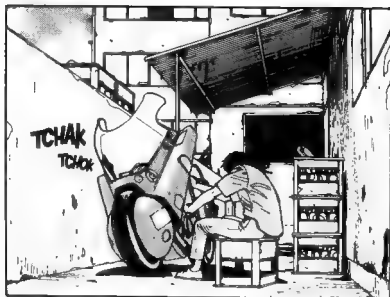






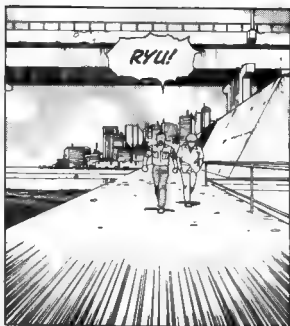


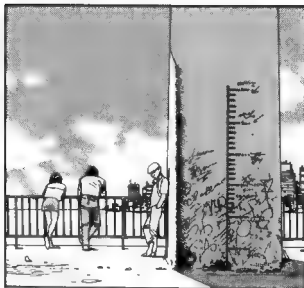












...BUCKETS  
THAT FLY,  
HUNK?

THAT'S  
SORT OF  
WHAT THEY  
LOOKED  
LIKE.



I'VE HEARD  
OF THEM  
FLYING PLAT-  
FORMS.

THE ARMY  
INTRODUCED  
THEM THIS  
YEAR



SO THAT'S SOMETHING  
ELSE THEY CAN USE  
AGAINST US.

AND IT  
LOOKED LIKE  
THEY'D DOUBLED  
THE GUARD SINCE  
THE LAST  
TIME.



WE BEAT THE  
BUSHES FOR SMALL  
GAME AND A TIGER  
COMES AFTER  
US...



YEAH...



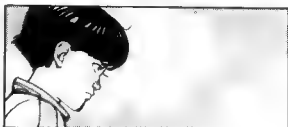
YOU BLEW  
UP THE OLYMPIC  
SITE TO STOP THE  
ARMY USING IT AFTER  
THE GAMES, DIDN'T  
YOU?



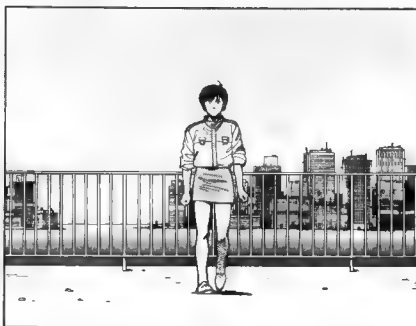
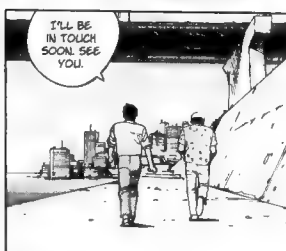
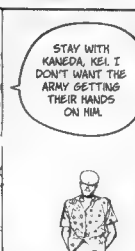
WORD IS,  
TOP BRASS  
HELD AN  
EMERGENCY  
MEETING JUST  
A FEW WEEKS  
AGO.



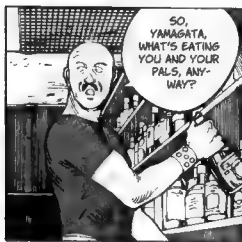
WE GOT REPORTS ON  
PART OF WHAT WENT ON  
THERE. I DON'T KNOW  
EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING  
DOWN, BUT THEY'RE  
POURING PHENOMENAL  
AMOUNTS OF MONEY  
INTO IT.

















NICE  
TO SEE  
YOU MADE IT  
SAFE AND  
SOUND.



WHICH  
MEANS  
...?



IT WASN'T  
HARD TO FIGURE  
OUT. YOU WENT  
OFF TO MEET  
YOUR BROTHER.



MIND  
YOUR OWN  
BUSINESS.



MIND  
YOUR  
MANNERS!



WHAT THE  
HELL DO YOU  
KNOW ABOUT  
MANNERS?!

EEP!



KLAM



YAA  
!!

KROF



YOU!!

KANEDA  
!!

OW!!

GET OFFA ME,  
YOU MORON!



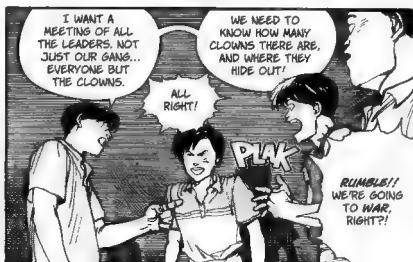


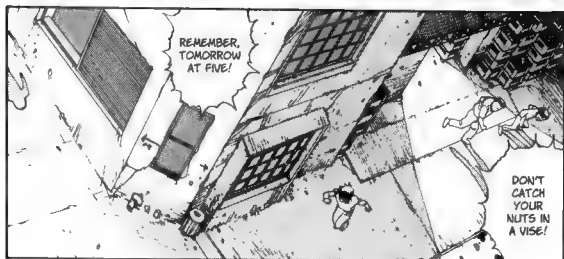


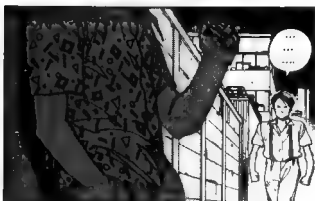
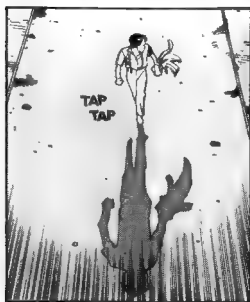


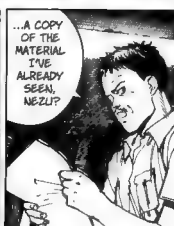
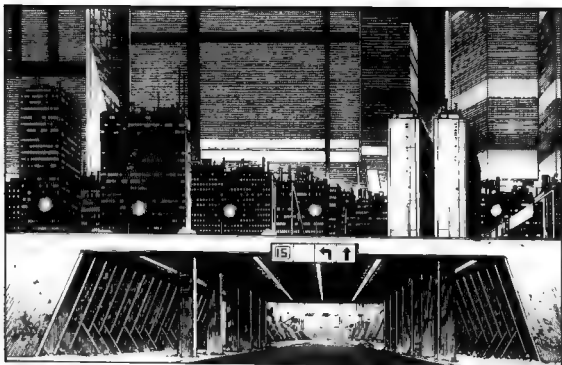


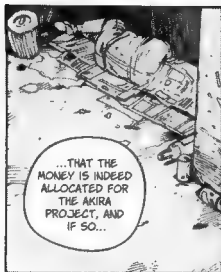
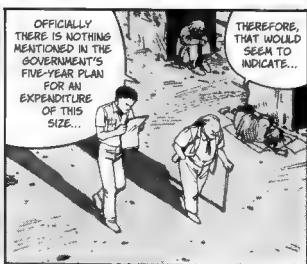




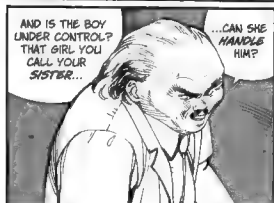
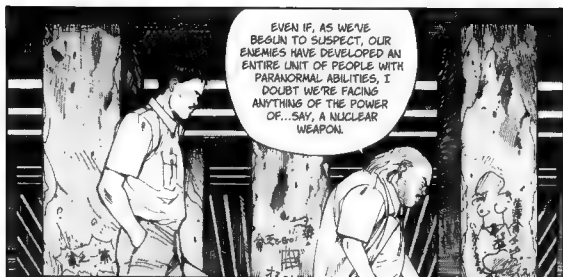






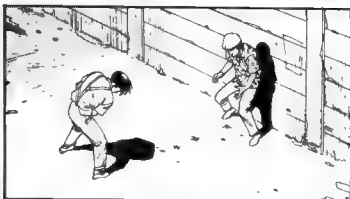


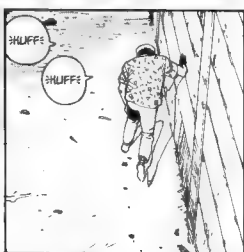
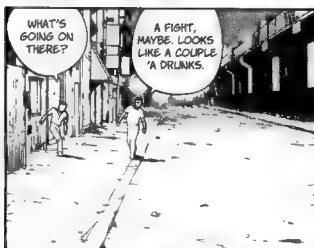


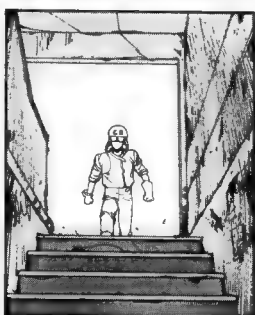
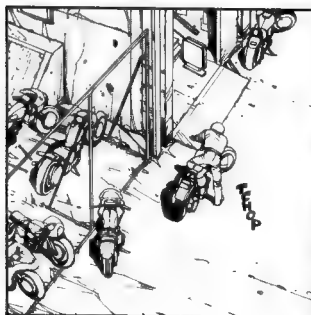
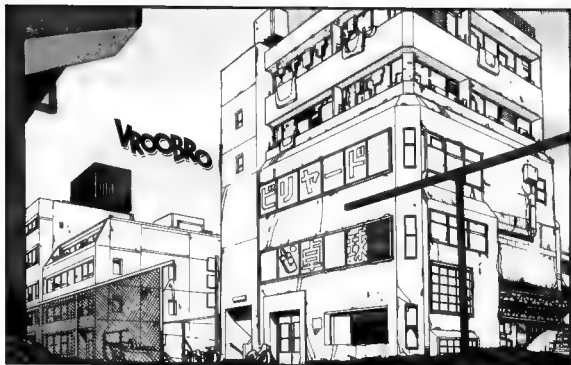


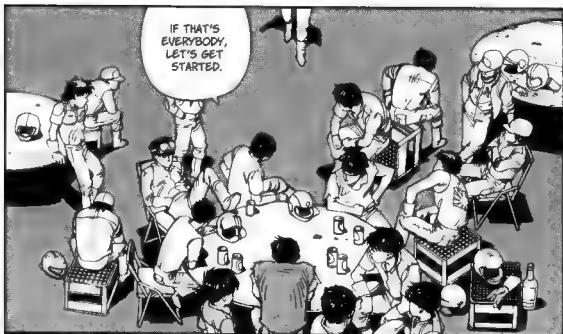






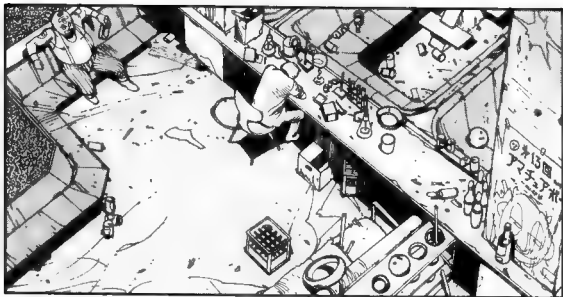


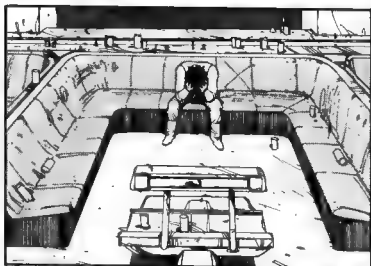














HE RIPPED A  
GUY'S HEAD  
OPEN... WITHOUT  
TOUCHING  
HIM?!



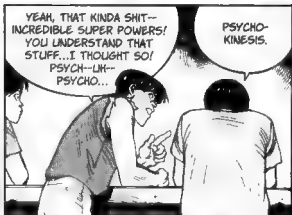
I KNEW YOU'D  
THINK I WAS  
CRAZY! THAT'S  
WHY I DIDN'T  
WANT TO TELL  
YOU!



MAKING THINGS  
MOVE AND  
EXPLODE...



YEAH, THAT KINDA SHIT--  
INCREDIBLE SUPER POWERS!  
YOU UNDERSTAND THAT  
STUFF...I THOUGHT SO!  
PSYCH--UH--  
PSYCHO...



PSYCHO-  
KINESIS.

THIS STUFF'S  
BEEN COMING  
UP A LOT  
LATELY.



HOW  
FASCINATING!

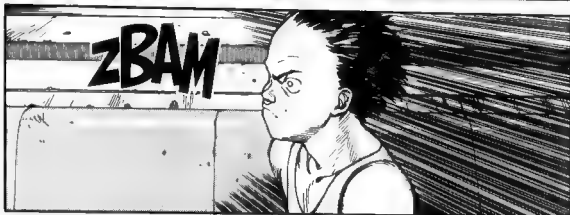


I  
WANT  
TO HEAR  
MORE.



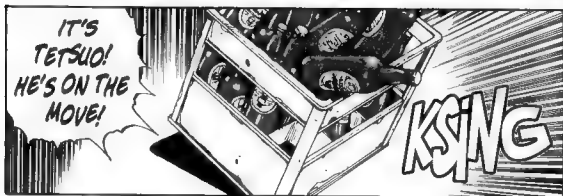
YEAH..  
ME,  
TOO.







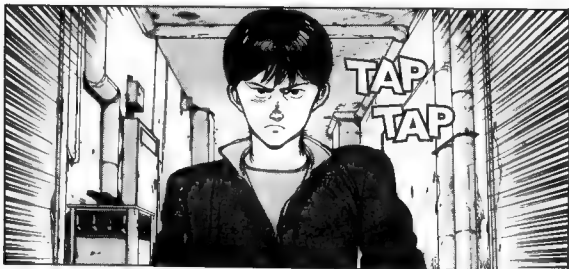


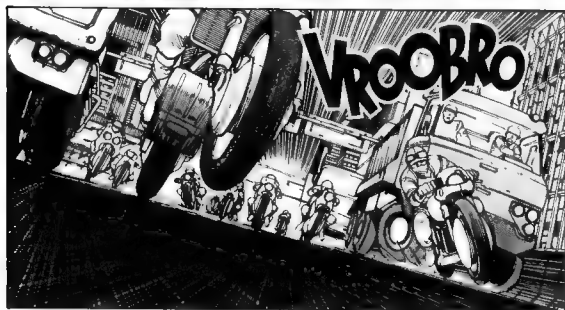


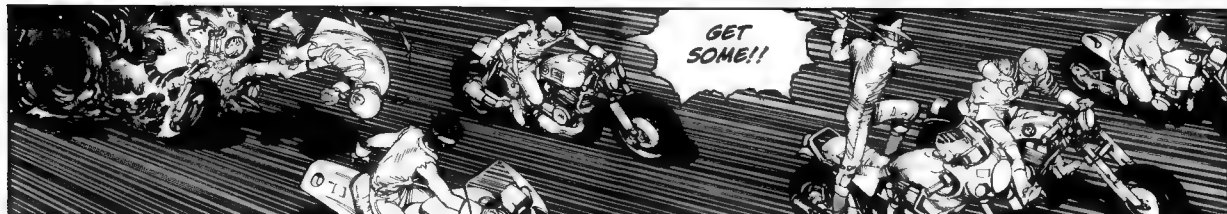
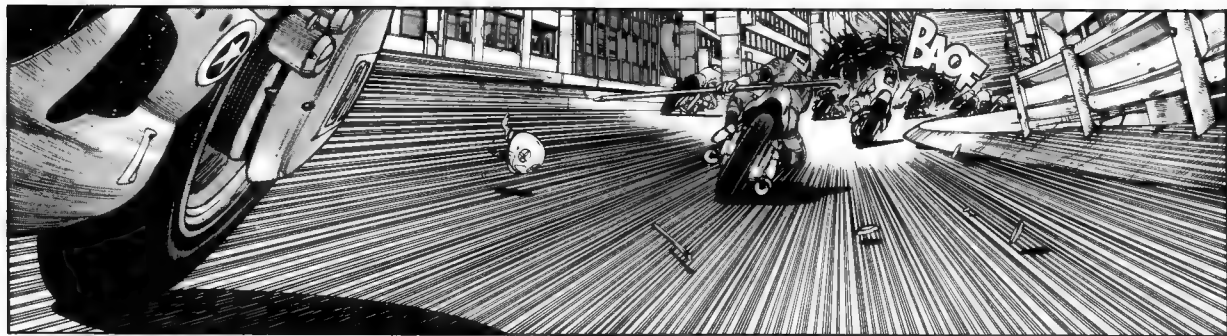


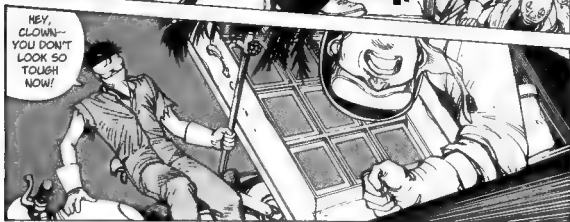


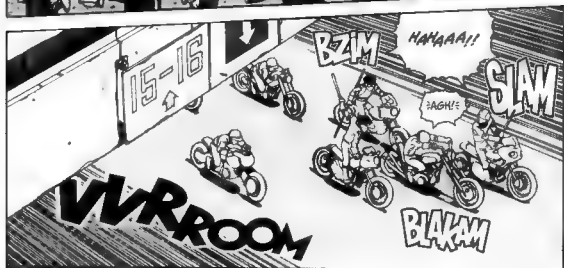
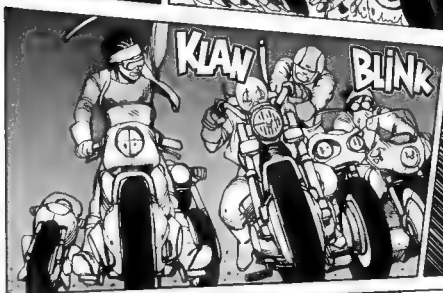


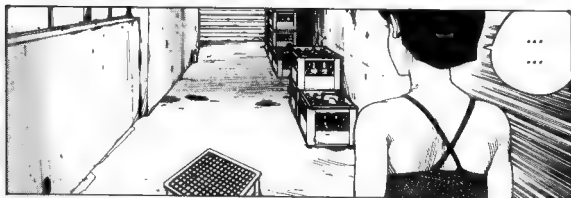
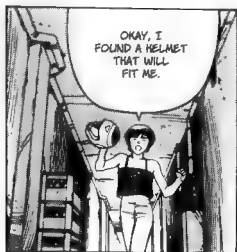


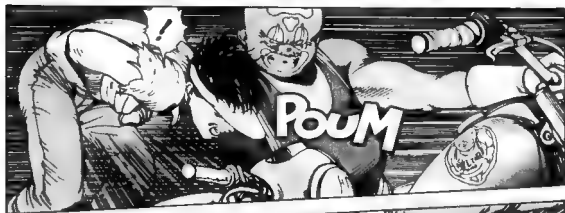






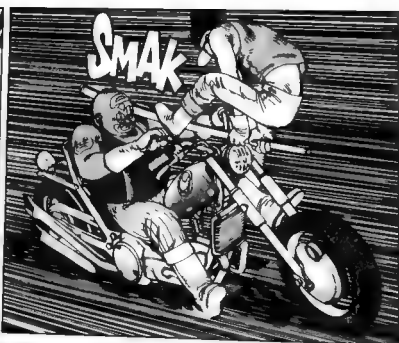


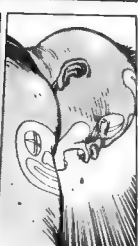
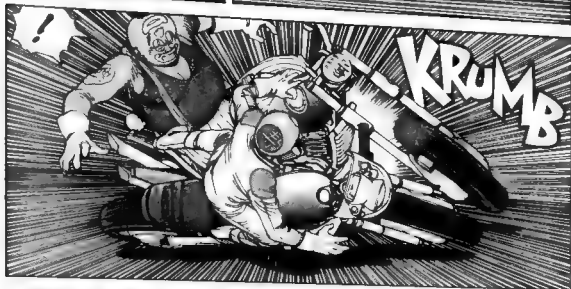
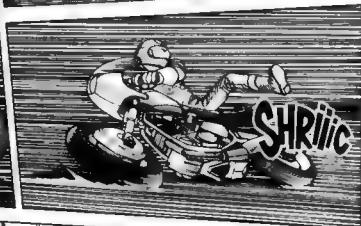




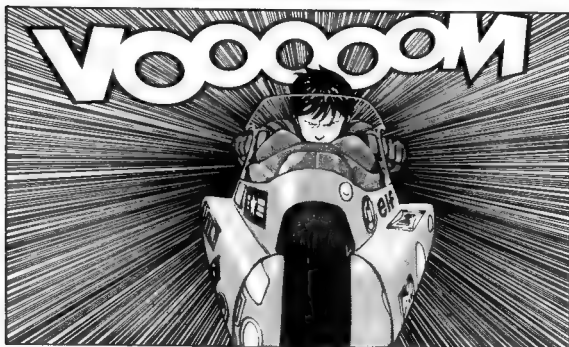


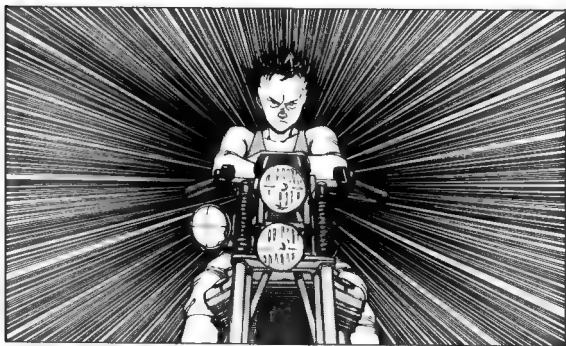


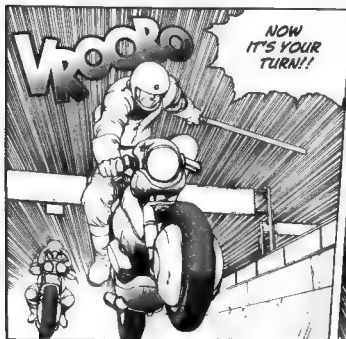
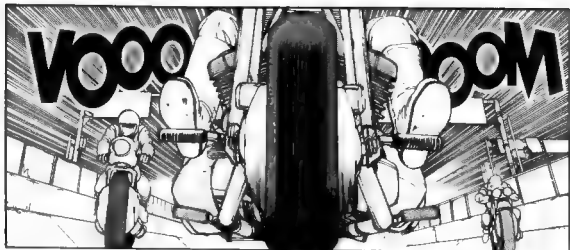


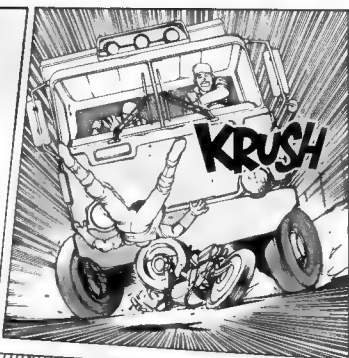




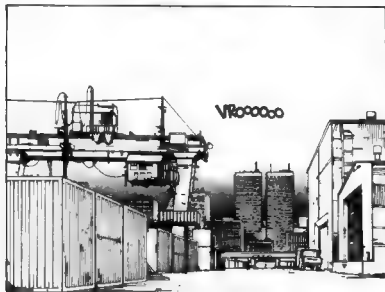
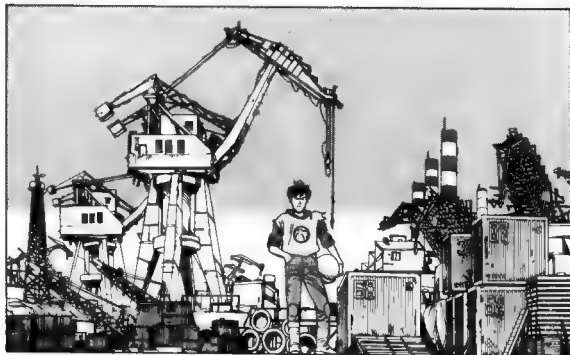


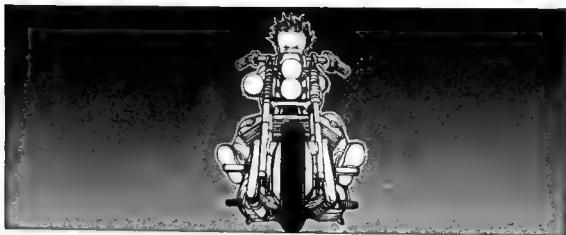




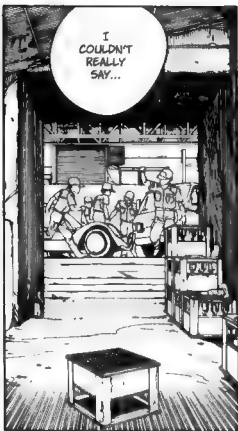




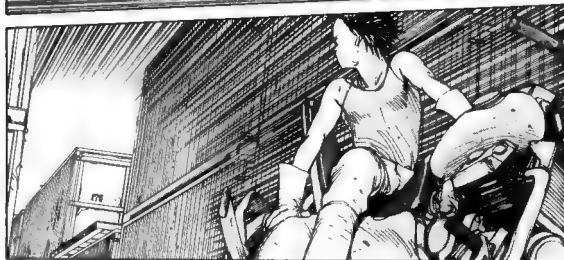


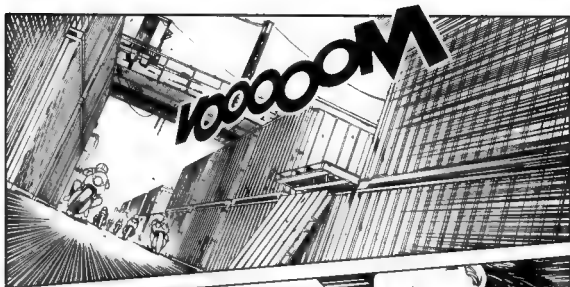


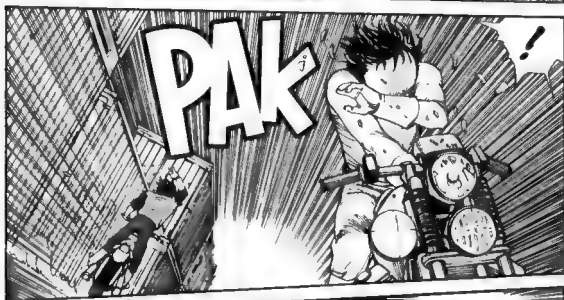




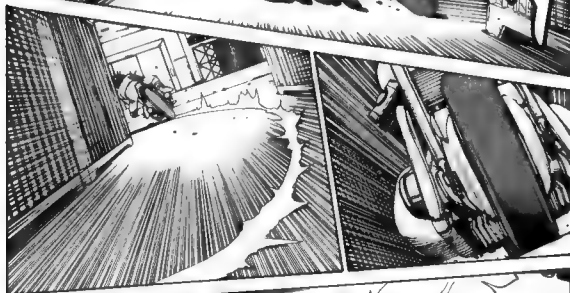
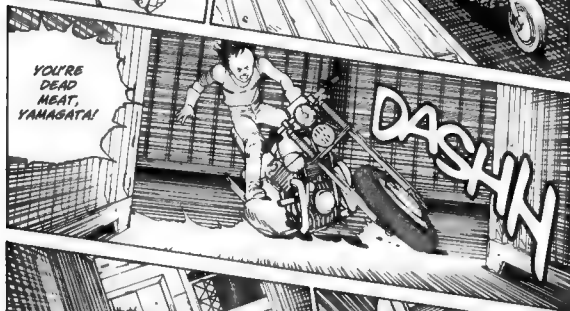


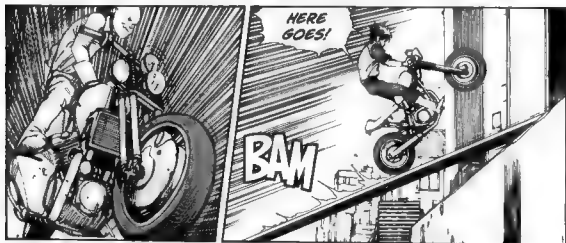


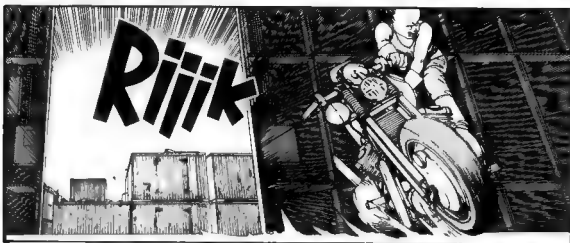
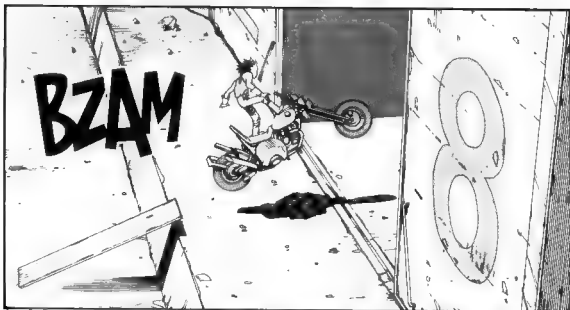


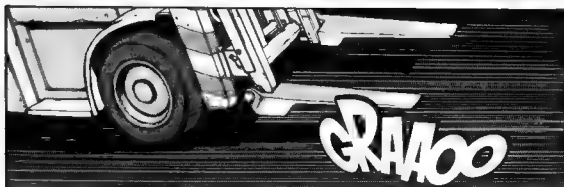


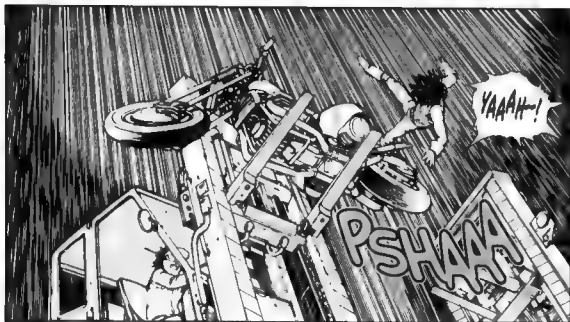


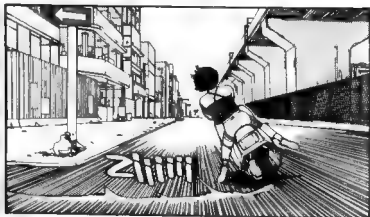
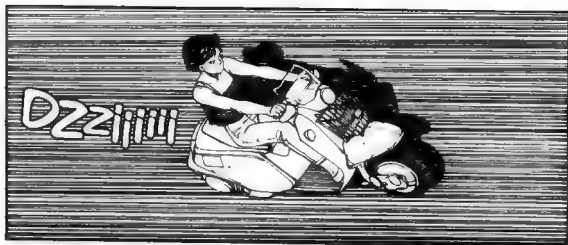


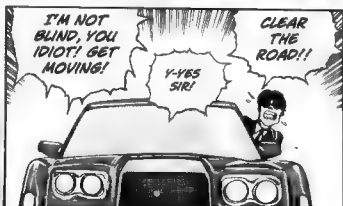
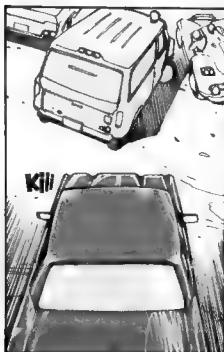
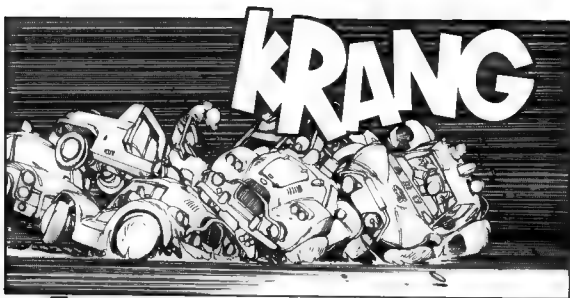




















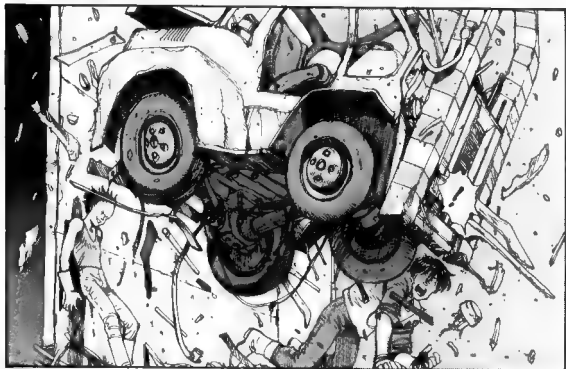
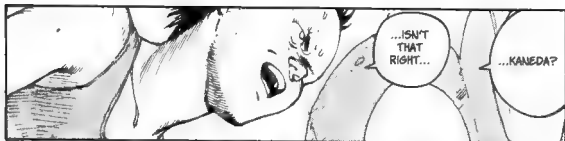




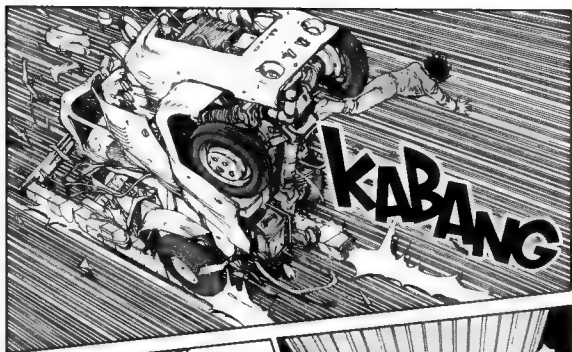








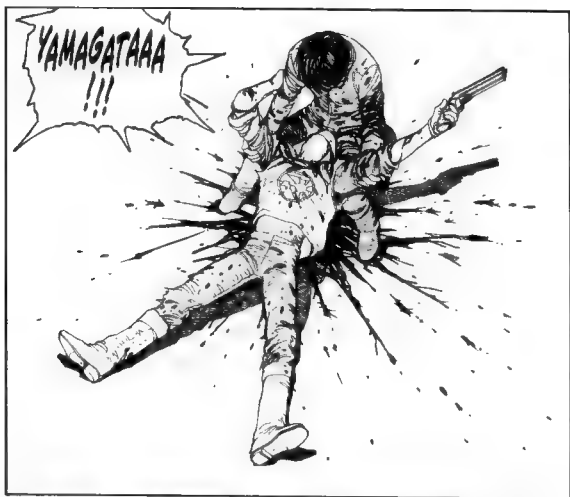






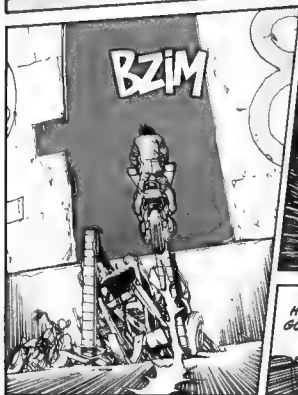




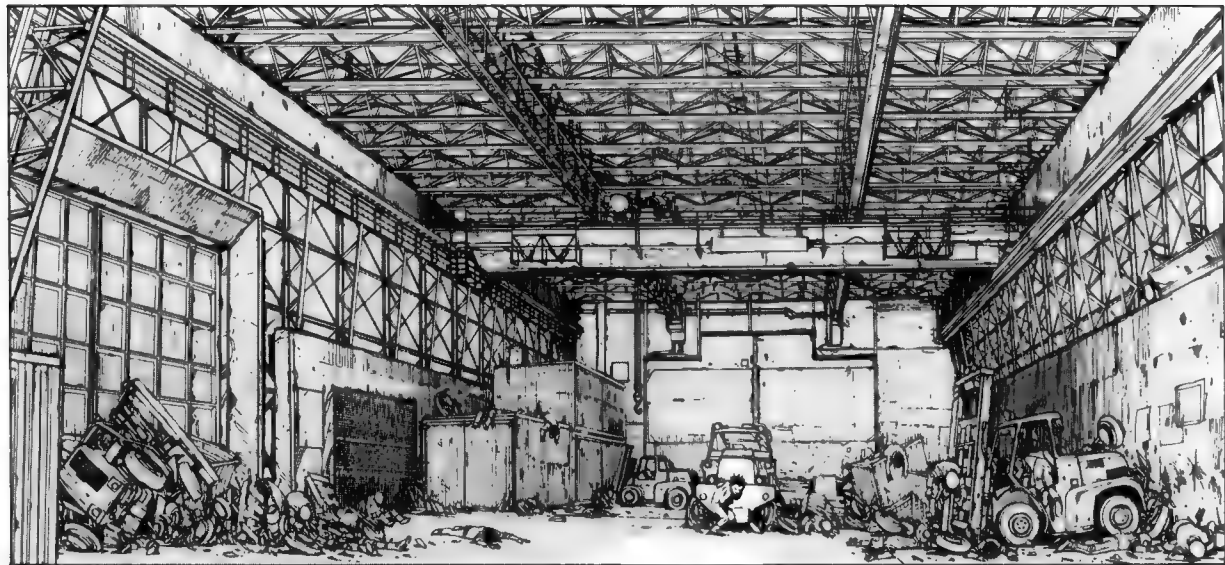








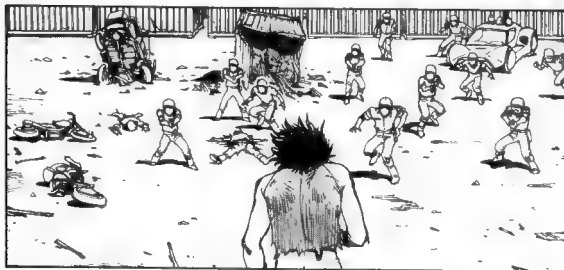
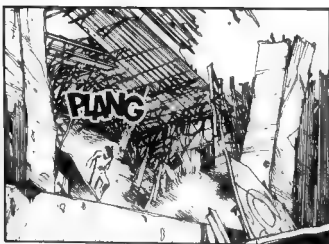
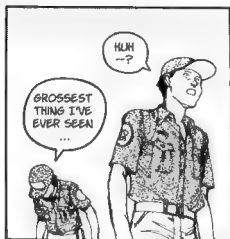






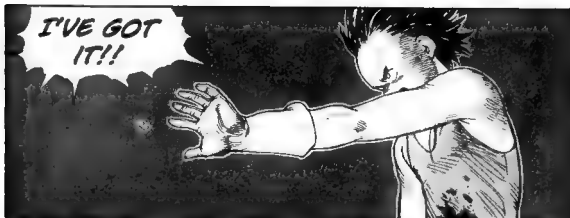














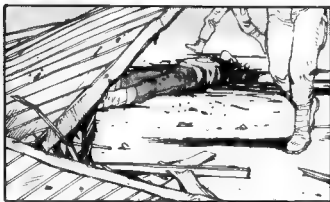


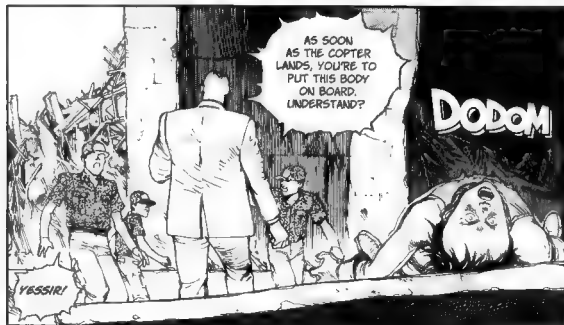
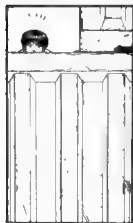








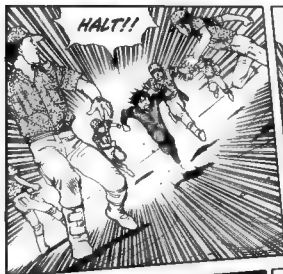




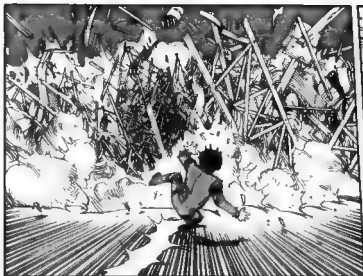




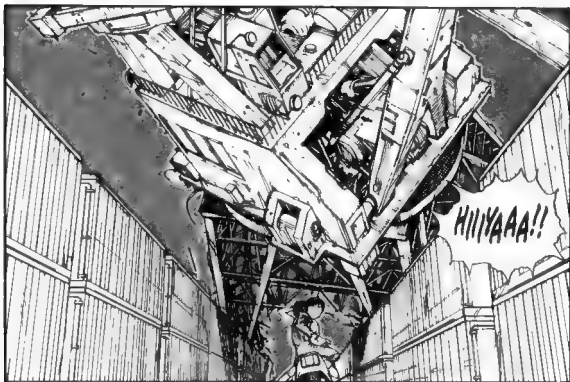
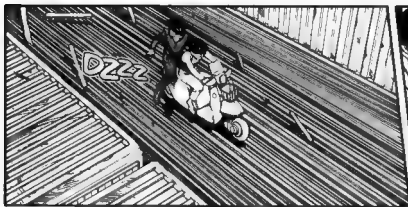








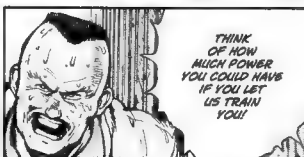
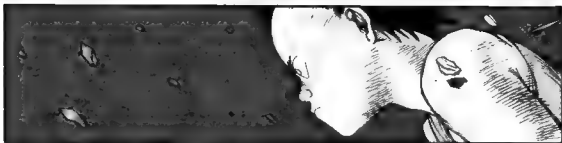
















# KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Katsuhiro Otomo was born in 1954 in Japan's Miyagi Prefecture, a rural province some 300 miles northeast of Tokyo. While in high school, Otomo became, in his own words, "crazy about the movies." The young artist often travelled three hours by train just to see films, and the influence of cinema is a constant thread that runs through Otomo's work.

Soon after graduating high school, Otomo moved to Tokyo with the goal of becoming a comics artist. His first professional work was *Jyu-sei* (*A Gun Report*), an adaptation of the Prosper Merimée novella *Mateo Falcone*, which appeared in the weekly magazine *Action*. Otomo went on to create a series of short stories, usually twenty to thirty pages, challenging works that captured widespread critical acclaim in Japan. A 1980 review in the *Asahi* newspaper said, "Just as the New Cinema movement had demolished the old style of Hollywood filmmaking to usher in a fresh style of movie production in America, Katsuhiro Otomo... came to Tokyo to create a new comics style and shattered the conventions existing in manga."

In 1979, publication began on Otomo's first serialized work, *Fireball*, a story built around a "man versus computer" theme. Though the series was never completed, *Fireball* marked the beginning of Otomo's interest in science-fiction themes and was the forerunner of future work that would define his comics career and help establish him internationally as one of the acknowledged masters of the comics medium. *Domu*, first serialized in 1980 and collected in 1983, became a bestseller and was the first manga to win the coveted Science Fiction Grand Prix Award, Japan's equivalent to America's Nebula Award. The media

attention gained from this landmark achievement made Otomo one of the best-known comics authors in Japan. Critics raved about *Domu*, a story that combined terrifying paranormal genre elements with poignant observation of urban life in modern Japan. From the *Yomiuri* newspaper: "The weirdness that lurks in the seemingly peaceful living environment of a huge housing complex symbolizes the precariousness hidden at the bottom of today's living conditions in Japan."

Upon completion of *Domu*, Otomo began work on *Akira*, a two-thousand-plus-page epic of staggering illustrative virtuosity and gut-wrenching thematic power. Ten years in the making and eventually collected in six volumes, *Akira* went on to win every possible award and spawned video games, an animated feature film directed by Otomo himself — compared favorably by critics to science-fiction masterpieces such as *Blade Runner* and *A Clockwork Orange* — and a blizzard of merchandise. *Akira* has been published in virtually every language and stands not only as one of the crown jewels of manga, but is regarded by many as the finest work of graphic fiction ever created, anywhere. While the completion of *Akira* marked the beginning of Otomo's moving away from comics — his only major comics work since *Akira* has been the writing of *The Legend of Mother Sarah* — it began his odyssey as a filmmaker. After completion of the animated *Akira*, Otomo has gone on to work on a variety of animated films, including *Labyrinth Stories*, *Robot Carnival*, *Roujin Z*, *Spriegan*, and *Memories*, an anthology of adaptations of earlier Otomo comics stories. Otomo also directed the live-action *World Apartment Horror* as well as television commercials for Honda, Suntory, and Canon. Otomo lives and works in Tokyo.



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